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# The Essay

A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY

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*edited by*

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Prentice-Hall, Inc.

New York

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PRENTICE-HALL ENGLISH LITERATURE SERIES

*Maynard Mack, Editor*

<i>First printing</i>	<i>March, 1952</i>
<i>Second printing</i>	<i>January, 1954</i>

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*For*  
MY MOTHER



## Acknowledgment

I AM GLAD to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to the following persons, who have been constantly helpful throughout the preparation of this book: Mr. William A. Pullin, Assistant Vice-President of Prentice-Hall, Inc.; Professor Maynard Mack, Department of English, Yale University; Professor Thomas Clark Pollock, Dean of the Washington Square College of Arts and Science, New York University; Professor Mark Schorer, Department of English, The University of California; Professor Glen Leggett, Department of English, The Ohio State University; Mr. Robert Christin, Department of English, The Ohio State University; my colleagues, the late Professor Sidney Cox, Doctor John A. Winterbottom, and Mr. Harry T. Schultz, Dartmouth College; and Mr. R. J. Crossley, Dartmouth '51.

J.L.S.



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## General Introduction

MOST OF US read more essays than we realize. Some of them we read for the pleasure that good literature provides. Some we read to satisfy curiosities aroused by an unusual title or by a phrase that happens to catch our attention as we idly turn the pages of a magazine. Some we read for information needed in our college or professional work.

Whatever our reasons for reading them, we do not have to go far to find them, for they appear on every side, in magazines, newspapers, and books. There are essays on contemporary social, economic, and political problems, "profile" biographies, studies of the ideas at the roots of our culture, semitechnical essays explaining aspects of the sciences to layman, reminiscences, flights of zany humor, critical essays, editorials and columns—the list can go on indefinitely. The many subjects, purposes, and manners of treatment make impossible any very narrow and binding definition of the genre. Today we simply give the name of essay to any short, unified work of nonfictional prose having some degree of complexity and dealing with a single subject.

When we read essays, we should want to read them with full understanding of their meaning and value. This understanding is not always easy to achieve; for the essay is a medium of expression which, when the subject and purpose require, can become almost as complex and subtle as a poem or a short

story. Thus, we may derive useful instruction and practice from reading a collection of essays having a variety of subjects and purposes and different degrees of complexity. This book is intended to provide such a collection and part of the instruction and practice; it should encourage the seeking of another important part in classroom discussion.

It is also intended to be an aid to composition. One consequence of instruction and practice in careful reading is improvement in our own writing. We cannot learn to write simply by reading the works of others, no matter how excellent they are, because even in those works whose subjects and purposes are nearest our own there is no ready-made formula which can be abstracted and applied directly to the compositional problems before us. But as we examine the details of the essays we read, and above all as we see how they function together to express a meaning that is far more than simply their sum, we have a better understanding of the nature of unity, coherence, and emphasis in a work and of the general ways in which these qualities can be realized in any composition, including the essays and near-essays which we write: the themes, term papers—even the technical reports prepared for courses in the sciences. As we become more certain of our standards of judgment and more skilled in applying them to what we read, we become more critical, in a creative way, of our own compositions and more careful and imaginative in revising them until they can be measured against these standards without embarrassing us.

In learning to read with full understanding, we must analyze many of the essays that come before us. This book provides questions and comments on particular essays and introductions to the main sections to make analysis easier. But, as a glance at more than one essay immediately makes plain, there can be no predetermined and rigid method of analysis, for the same reason that there can be no very limiting definition of the genre and no abstract formula for composing essays:

there are too many subjects, purposes, and manners of treatment. Furthermore, we cannot say in advance at what points our interest will first be engaged or our understanding will begin; yet these are the points from which we usually start our analyses.

It might be supposed from all this that we can bring to the problems of analysis only common sense, alertness, and the bright hope that all will be revealed if we are diligent. Actually we bring much more. There are major elements—purpose, ideas, tone—always present in an essay. There are certain technical devices of arrangement—point of view, order of ideas, usage level, and so forth—which necessarily accompany these elements. We can learn something in advance about these elements and technical devices and thereby accelerate and increase the accuracy of analysis by looking for and studying them. We must always remember that our analysis—our examining of matters like tone or point of view in momentary separation from each other—is an artificial procedure which must be followed by a synthesis, by a study of the integrating relationships of these parts in the essay considered *as a whole*. Only after such synthesis will the meaning and value of the essay become apparent.

ii.

First of the major elements to be considered is *purpose*. Whether an essay consists of a simple, straightforward explanation of how to do something (such as "Learning to Ski: Straight Running") or of a complex recreation of the past (such as "The Death of Stonewall Jackson"), it has a purpose which helps to establish the meaning of the essay by partially determining the selection and arrangement of the details. But here an apparent difficulty arises. We cannot know what the purpose of an essay is until we have an understanding of the meaning, yet we need to know something about the purpose to reach the meaning—something, but fortunately not everything.

When we read we can form a tentative conception of the purpose from as much of the essay as we understand (and this is a good deal) before we begin our closer analysis. And as long as we are willing to test it in discussion of the essay with other readers and to modify it as we acquire more understanding, we may use it with profit and with little risk of error.

Two other major elements in every essay are the *ideas* and the *tone*, which together express the meaning. As used here, the term *ideas* includes all the specific facts, together with the more general explanations of the logical, functional, and other relations between the facts, and the concepts of values, of categories, and of principles governing actions, that are stated or very strongly implied in the essay. The term *tone* is used for the attitude, or mixture of attitudes, taken by the essay toward these ideas. It is not possible to give in a few words a complete definition of an essay's tone. The only really complete definition is the essay itself. Therefore, in speaking of the tone we must depend upon partial definitions, which we try to make as exact as we can without becoming involved in an unwieldy number of words. We depend upon such terms as *ironic*, *friendly*, *informal*, *sarcastic*, *sentimental*, *whimsical*, *angry*, *gushing*, *humorous*, *jeering*, *solemn*, *impersonal*, or some combination of these.

The ideas and the tone are truly different elements, but they are mutually dependent and occur everywhere together. This is particularly true of the interpretations and evaluations of aspects of human experience that form a large part of the meaning in the essays of the second and third sections of this volume. While concepts of value form the core of most of these interpretations and evaluations, they are accompanied by attitudes which are invariably attached to such ideas when they are applied to actual instances in human experience. Here, as elsewhere, ideas evoke most of the tone of the essays. At the same time, some of the ideas are expressed by words and phrases which can mean different things in different contexts,

and the tone of the particular essay in which they appear helps to fix the meaning they are to have in that context.<sup>1</sup>

The relation of ideas and tone may be seen in the essay "Doctor Arnold." Here the facts about Arnold's humorless pomposities and his vague, erratic, and often contradictory convictions help to evoke a tone of amusing but somewhat cruelly intolerant irony. Elsewhere in the essay this tone subtly dominates the evaluations of Arnold's life and works; for though the language of these passages seems at first glance to allow Arnold some dignity and accomplishment ("He became known, not merely as a Headmaster, but as a public man"), the tone unobtrusively modifies the meaning until in the end we are left to conclude that Arnold's career was at best futile and absurd. (Such is the effect of the tone evoked by the sentence immediately following the one just quoted: "He held decided opinions upon a large number of topics; and he enunciated them—based as they were almost invariably upon general principles—in pamphlets, in prefaces, and in magazine articles, with an impressive self-confidence.")

The ideas and tone of an essay are communicated through selection and ordering of details and through certain technical devices referred to earlier. The details which, in theory at least, are available to an essayist make up the whole of man's subjective and objective, or "inner" and "outer," experience—all the aspects of all the objects, people, actions, ideas, and feelings he perceives in the world about him or

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<sup>1</sup> We are accustomed to the odd shifts in meaning of words such as *liberal* and *modern*, which in some contexts are terms of praise and in others are terms of condemnation and even contempt. However, even words such as *logical* and *enlightenment*, which are fairly stable and are usually terms of approval, can be wrenched out of their normal sphere by the tone of the surrounding context. This is strikingly illustrated in Allen Tate's essay "The Present Function of Criticism" (in his *Reason in Madness*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1941). In his final paragraph Tate writes, "This ought to be the end of literature, if literature were logical; it is not logical but tough; and after the dark ages of our present enlightenment it will flourish again." Here the terms are no less than scathing.

recreates in the imaginative realm within.<sup>2</sup> In smaller groups these details make up the general subjects which he treats: downhill skiing, the technique of criticizing music, the career of Guy Fawkes, the influence of the pioneer on American culture, the greatness of Beethoven's music, and so forth. Naturally, the purpose and meaning do not permit the inclusion of all the details associated with a general subject, and the essayist selects the appropriate ones and arranges them in an expressive structure.

For example, in treating the subject of instrument flying, Wolfgang Langewiesche could draw on all that he knew about the history of instrument flying, pioneer fliers, inventors, instrument designers and manufacturers, training equipment and procedure, the effects of instrument flying upon commercial, military, and private aviation, the economic consequences of these effects, individual experiences—crashes, narrow escapes, humdrum flights—and the great welter of feelings associated with these experiences: fear, humor, pathos, anger, sorrow, and so forth. The aspects of all these would furnish him with enough details to fill several books, but he chose only those which would serve to explain the process of instrument flying to the layman in an interesting, nontechnical way. He omitted the details that a flight engineer or an economist would want, for the purpose of the essay did not include supplying their professional needs.

The very fact that the number of details related to even the simplest general subject is so great means that little can be said

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<sup>2</sup> Ideas are part of man's experience. Therefore, ideas are among the details, great and small, on which the essayist draws in order to communicate his particular ideas in a particular essay. The ideas-of-the-essay should not be confused with the ideas-as-experience out of which they are partially derived. The two groups may be similar, but they are not identical. Of course, it must be remembered that once the ideas *in* the essay have been formulated, they too become part of man's experience and take their place among the possible details from which still other selections and orderings may be made for the communication of still other ideas in subsequent essays!

about them until we come to those that have been chosen for particular essays. The only generalization that needs making here is that it is almost always helpful to consider what details related to the general subject have been omitted, what would be the effect of their inclusion upon the ideas and tone of the essay, and why the apparent purpose of the essay precludes them.

iii.

Devices of arrangement do not vary from essay to essay as widely as do details. Therefore we can generalize about them, provided we are careful not to regard them as prefabricated and interchangeable parts mechanically assembled in a number of containers for delivery to the reader. On the contrary, they are the means by which the essayist thinks his way through his materials, and thus the means by which we as readers duplicate the process in ourselves.

One of the most fundamental of these devices of arrangement is *point of view*. This is the position from which the details of the essay are surveyed. It is a "physical" position in space and time (though in some cases this position is everywhere, no spatial or temporal limits being imposed). It is also an "intellectual" position defined by the apparent presence (or, in special cases, absence) of particular standards of value, conceptions about the nature of the world, prejudices, emotions, associations, and so forth.<sup>3</sup> The point of view may be

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<sup>3</sup> We infer the nature of this "intellectual" position from ideas and tone, which it helps to determine. It is not, of course, the same thing as the ideas and tone. Indeed, insofar as the tone is concerned, the emotions that help to define the "intellectual" position may not be those communicated by the tone. For example, the emotions of the boy whose "physical" and "intellectual" position comprise the point of view in "A Visit to Grandpa's" are not those expressed in the tone, for it includes depths of sadness and tenderness apparently not stirred in the boy. It is also worth noting that the "intellectual" position inferred from an essay is not necessarily that of the essayist, which, unless he specifically identifies it, we cannot know, and which may be wholly different.

that of a special person through whose mind the details are presented. It may be that of an omniscient, almost godlike intelligence from which, apparently, no aspects of human experience are hidden. It may be one suggesting some kind of automatic machine capable of recording facts and explanations while making no judgments or evaluations and feeling no emotions.

Obviously, the position from which the great mass of details related to a general subject are viewed has much to do with the realization of the purpose of an essay and with the expression of its ideas and tone, because on this position depends much of the selection and arrangement of the particular details through which the realization and the expression are achieved. Therefore, our understanding and appraisal of the essay require our consideration of the point of view and its effects.

Many different points of view are found in the essays that follow. In "Guy Fawkes," the material is examined from the position of an almost wholly impersonal reporter. The purpose of this essay is to present facts. Few value judgments and feelings are expressed, even by implication. In some of the other essays, the material is studied from the position of a participant who speaks in the first person directly to the reader. In "A Raid in the Desert," T. E. Lawrence gives an account of his efforts, made in pitch darkness, to find an unexploded mine with a sensitive trigger. The essay seems to take us to the very spot, and suggests a sardonic, almost flippant attitude toward the experience and the possibility of sudden, violent death. Still other essays express insights, interpretations, and feelings which are best presented from the physical and intellectual positions of a special observer who is not an immediate participant in the events described. The observer may speak to the reader in the first person, as in "The Vicar of Lynch," or may be used as a central intelligence who does not speak but through whose senses and mind the details of the essay are



passed to the reader, as in "Sunshine Charley," where the implied observer is an anonymous member of a courtroom audience.

Another fundamental device of arrangement is the *order of ideas* in the paragraphs and the essay as a whole. This helps express relationships among the ideas and to evoke attitudes by emphasis, juxtapositions, contrasts, and ironic shifts and reversals. While many different orders are possible, most of them are examples, variations, or combinations of a few simple orders. These are: (a) the *chronological*, which stresses the time sequence of events and changes, as in "London," a survey of the alterations in the great city over a fifty-year period; (b) the *causal*, which focuses attention upon cause and effect relationships within the subject, as in "Sunshine Charley," a study moving backward and forward through time to bring out the causes of the stockmarket boom of the late twenties that made statesmen out of big-time gamblers; (c) the *logical*, which helps to make apparent the inductive or deductive relations among facts and conclusions derived from them, as in "Science and General Education," an argument on the place of science in secondary school programs backed largely by inductive reasoning from facts about education and the needs of individuals and society; and (d) the *associative*, which follows patterns of association suggested by figures of speech, puns, allusions, literary conventions, recurring aspects of experience, and so forth, and is often used for humor and surprise, as in "Is There an Osteosynchondroitician in the House?" a frequently witty excursion among mixed metaphors and memories of the stereotyped language and the ludicrous situations in cheap fiction.

Closely related to point of view is the *usage level* of the language in an essay. This ranges from the vulgar level, full of colloquialisms, slang, and even illiteracies, of "Davy Crockett in Love" to the formal level of "America's Responsibilities," an essay of mature interest intended for an educated

audience, which uses many words and sentence structures that belong more to written than to spoken language. Like the point of view, the usage level helps to determine the selection and arrangement of the details included in the essay and thus has a significant effect upon the ideas and the tone. The life of the frontier is recreated with marvelous color in the coarse, pungent informalities of "Davy Crockett in Love," for a concrete idiom can convey a sense or "feel" of life as the words of "America's Responsibilities" cannot. At the same time, such an idiom, expressive as it is, does not reach the areas of human thought and experience treated in the more formal essay. Attitude, likewise, is communicated in part by language levels: an easy, outgoing informality by the vulgate, a neutral impersonalness by the technical level, a certain restrained dignity and earnestness by the formal. But these attitudes are vague and may be easily overbalanced by the effects of the ideas or some of the other technical features. Thus, for example, "The Vicar of Lynch" uses language ordinarily thought of as belonging to a fairly high and formal level, yet the essay is quite informal and anything but grave.

The *degree of connotation* of the language used is of the greatest importance to the purpose and meaning of an essay because of the power of connotations to express associated feelings and ideas which have accumulated in varying quantities and degrees of intensity around the denotations of words. Just how powerful may be their effect in the essay is suggested when we compare the connotations of words having the same or very similar denotations, such as *fat*, *portly*, *rotund*, *plump*, *stout*, *obese*, and *puffy*; or *poor*, *needy*, *broke*, *indigent*, *hard up*, and *impecunious*.

In general, essays such as "Guy Fawkes," whose purpose is simply to present facts, and essays such as "Science in General Education," whose purpose is to persuade the reader by appealing to his reason more than to his feelings, tend to use language in which connotations are not strong (as, for example, in the

sentence "Fawkes was removed the same night to the Tower, and was subjected to further examination by the judges Popham and Coke, and Sir William Waad, lieutenant of the Tower, on each of the following days," which is an unusually restrained statement of what must have been a dramatic series of events). Essays such as "Beethoven," which deliberately excite the reader's emotions, or "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn," which exploit every expressive resource of the essay for a rich, complicated representation of life, use powerfully connotative language. We read:

What lifted Beethoven above the old master, and above all other men save perhaps Bach and Brahms, was simply his greater dignity as a man. The feelings Haydn put into tone were the feelings of a country pastor, a rather civilized stockbroker, a viola player gently mellowed by Kulmbacher.

Instead of demanding proof of the assertion of the first sentence, we tend to accept it because we are influenced by the connotations of *country pastor*, *rather civilized stockbroker*, and *viola player gently mellowed by Kulmbacher*,<sup>4</sup> which suggest quiet, friendly, sentimental, somewhat unimaginative men—capable, but lacking the energy and passion of genius.

Among the words and phrases having the strongest connotations are those which make up *images*. The precise nature and effects of images are matters over which there is considerable disagreement, partly because their connotations affect different readers in different ways. In general, however, the term is applied to a small group of words—a noun or verb and its modifiers, a prepositional phrase, a clause, or at most, perhaps, a sentence or two—which makes an immediate, specific, and strong impression upon the mind's "senses": the equivalents of sight, hearing, touch, pain, and so forth. Thus images evoke a particular sound, the feeling of a special surface texture, the vision of an object or action (or a group of objects and actions

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<sup>4</sup> Kulmbacher is a black Bavarian beer.

so closely related in the external world as to effect the imagination as a single object or action). The image, therefore, is to be distinguished from the larger scene or description of which it may be a part, though just where the line is to be drawn in some instances is difficult to say.

Most images are figures of speech, such as metaphors and similes, which make comparisons between objects, actions, concepts, and other details, out of which the specific impression emerges. A few, however, do no more than name an odor, sound, object, or action which is by itself enough to have the imagistic effect upon the reader's mind. Miss Josephine Miles, a poet and critic, points out that in controlled psychological tests some readers find even the phrase "the house on the hill" enough to evoke a vivid image. Usually, however, language denoting something at once more individualized and less commonplace is required—something such as the white chickens and the red wheelbarrow sparkling with rain water in the startlingly brief but lovely and suggestive little poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams.

Whether they are figurative or not, images are by virtue of vividness, concreteness, and connotative power the most forceful, subtle, and expressive of the devices in a composition. Thus, when we read in "London," "I have seen and can remember at least five Londons. . . . The earliest was the London of the late 'nineties, when I was a small boy; a London of vast railway stations for ever full of golden fog . . .," we suddenly see the great billowing mixture of yellow coal smoke and steam; but more, we see it as *golden*—as something rich, rare, and associated with the remote and strange, with adventure and treasure; and thus we feel the boy's wonder and excitement. (How different would be the connotations if, instead of "golden fog," Sitwell had written "damp, sulfurous smog.") If we linger for a moment, the image may begin to expand and to take in a little of the background of the golden fog—

the sharp smells and the echoing rumbles and hisses of the station. But we must be careful to control our response to the image, rejecting all that is not immediately relevant. Otherwise we will be indulging in random daydreaming and reading badly.

*Illustrations* and *allusions* are such well-known features of essays as to require only passing mention. Illustrations explain unfamiliar topics by citing examples with which we are familiar, by analyzing aspects of the topics, or by comparing these aspects with objects, events, and concepts taken from everyday life. Allusions link the unfamiliar topics with familiar places, persons, and historical events or with literary characters, actions, and quotations. They may also be used to give authority to an opinion. In this case we should be careful not to accept without question statements that have been pinned to a glorious name or a resonant fragment of poetry. We should examine the arguments and evidence for the opinions to which the allusions give force and point.

Though they cannot express ideas, *rhythmical patterns* can express some attitudes which help to make up the tone of the essay, and thereby they can indirectly emphasize and otherwise qualify the ideas. Hence, they are important to the purpose and meaning of the essay. But in prose the variety of these patterns is so great that it is difficult and not very satisfactory to generalize about them. Many readers agree that the beginnings and ends of sentences and, to a less extent, of large subordinate elements such as long clauses and phrases, are the points at which rhythmical patterns are most felt and most effective. Beginning and ending with a heavy stress tends to emphasize the ideas at these points, and a series of heavy stresses may in some contexts, evoke a sense of direct force and earnestness. Such seems to be the effect of "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Of course, much of the placing of the stress depends upon the meaning of the words.

Another sentence having precisely the same syllabic arrangement as the one quoted above might have an entirely different rhythmical pattern and effect.

Beyond this we cannot go in a general discussion, for we quickly enter the region in which our statements hold good only for the passage under examination. The best way to analyze a passage in which we feel the rhythmical patterns may be important is to read it aloud, noting the effects that it has and testing our response to it in discussion with other readers. Discussion can help to keep us from being too subjective in our response.

*The length of sentences and paragraphs* has an effect on prose rhythm and presents the same difficulties of analysis and generalization. Variety of sentence and paragraph length makes a passage more interesting and sometimes more expressive, and short sentences and paragraphs, if they do not appear in excessive numbers, give force and interest to the ideas they express and thus clarify relationships and degrees of importance among the details. To determine other effects we must rely upon our sensitivity as readers and the suggestions and restraints provided by talking the essays over with other readers.

#### iv.

Such, then, are the aspects of the essay with which we are most concerned. We cannot formulate a study method in advance, but we can follow an informal procedure while reading the essays in this volume provided we are prepared to modify it according to the problems and flashes of insight occurring as we examine a particular work. One such procedure is described below. It assumes that some of our understanding and evaluation of an essay comes to us fitfully by means of trial and error and imaginative guessing which are corrected and completed in class discussion. It also assumes that most, if not all, of the essays in this volume are sufficiently meaningful and

challenging to be read once and reviewed carefully. Some should certainly be read a second or third time.

During the first reading, we should form our impressions of the larger, more conspicuous aspects of the work. We should keep asking ourselves, "What is the general purpose of this essay?" "What larger, more inclusive ideas are expressed?" "What is the general tone?" To answer these questions, we must pay close attention to all the smaller ideas and attitudes, many of which we can understand immediately. However, some of the subtler, less directly stated ones may still be awaiting discovery in an image, a strongly connotative phrase, or a passage of inductive reasoning which we did not follow to the end. In review, therefore, we usually need to give special attention to the devices of arrangement discussed above. But before we begin the review we must look up all words and allusions which we have not recognized in the first reading. There is no point in undertaking a careful analysis until we have done this, for the analysis might simply lead us farther and farther away from the meaning of the essay.

If we have not already done so, we should now decide what point of view and level of usage have been used. We should consider their appropriateness to the purpose in terms of their assets and limitations in expressing the general ideas and tone of the essay. If there are any shifts to other points of view or levels of usage, we should try to determine whether there are reasons for these shifts and whether the reasons are sufficient to justify them.

We should observe and mark for discussion the strongly connotative words and phrases, particularly those which constitute images. We should try to determine their relevance to the larger ideas of the essay and their effect upon the tone. We should ask whether they are appropriate to the purpose and whether, on their evidence, we should not alter our earlier conceptions of the purpose.

When we have done all this, our understanding and appre-

ciation of the essay will be much advanced. However, we must still consider the nuances of meaning suggested by the rhythmical patterns, the lengths of the sentences and paragraphs, and the orders of the ideas within the divisions of the essay and the essay as a whole. We should note the effects of the rhythms and the sentence and paragraph lengths, asking ourselves whether these effects are significant and appropriate or merely accidental—and perhaps misleading. We should consider the function of the orders of ideas and their relation to the purpose. Where orders have been based upon inductive reasoning, we should consider the number of instances cited in support of the conclusions stated (remembering that often only a few are cited as examples and that in such cases we should ask ourselves how effective they are in suggesting other instances which support the conclusions). We should consider, insofar as we can, the genuineness and suitability of the instances and the validity of the conclusions inferred from them. When the orders have been based upon deductive reasoning, we should consider the truth and accuracy of the premises, stated and implied, and we should examine closely the soundness of the reasoning to make sure that it is free of logical fallacies.<sup>5</sup>

By now we should understand the parts. Our business is to understand the whole. We must put the parts back together, which often means that we shall have to reread the essay to see their relationships. There is no method for comprehending the whole except by constantly asking of each detail, "Now that we know what this means or does in its immediate context, what is its function in relation to the entire essay?" Soon the whole meaning—or something very close to it (for there is al-

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<sup>5</sup> An excellent discussion of such fallacies and of the role of logic in reading and writing may be found in *Thinking Straight, A Guide for Readers and Writers* by Monroe C. Beardsley, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950. A simpler treatment of logic for readers may be found in *Preface to Critical Reading* by Richard D. Altick, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1946.



ways a little meaning left over to challenge our imaginations)—will be apparent. Yet our work is not quite done, for now we must judge the value of what we have read.

There are many questions to be asked of any essay, and its meaning will suggest most of them. There are, however, a few general questions which we can apply to all essays. The answers, of course, will vary greatly with the essays without always reflecting differences of value. The variations may be due simply to differences in the purposes of the essays. We should remember this fact when we come to the final measure of an essay's worth.

Some of these general questions are:

1. Is the essay clear and understandable?
2. Is the essay unified and compact, avoiding needless elaboration and irrelevant details?
3. Is the essay vivid: does it stimulate the imagination to recall or recreate concrete, specific scenes and actions which make strong impressions upon the mind's "senses"?
4. Are the details of the essay interesting or valuable by themselves, apart from their function in the essay as a whole?
5. Is the subject of the essay an important one? (This is a potentially dangerous question in that if we are not on guard it can lead to time-wasting wrangling. Yet it is one which we need to ask. Part of the value which an essay has for us must inevitably come from the importance which the subject has in our lives as something which we can use in our studies or professional work, as something which adds to our understanding of the world or to our humanity and worth as citizens of the world, or as something which delights and refreshes us. But our lives differ greatly: what one of us finds a matter of professional importance another finds only a matter of passing curiosity; what gives one of us the keenest pleasure bores or angers another. Because of this, we must be prepared and willing to abandon the discussion of the importance of the subject of an essay when disagreement is so great that no measure of the importance is possible. Our differences and the possibility that we may have to aban-

don the discussion do *not* mean that the question is useless or futile. There may be agreement. Where there is not, the question and the discussion at least serve to define the terms in which each of us should answer the question for himself.)

6. If the essay contains an interpretation of its subject, what is the worth of that interpretation? (This is another significant but potentially dangerous question which we must drop if the discussion degenerates into wrangling. In trying to answer it we must answer two lesser questions contained in it:

a. Is the essay's representation of life a truthful one, insofar as we can judge it? That is, does it correspond to life as we have observed it?

b. Does the interpretation make clear the relation of the subject to important human problems, concerns, and aspirations confronting the majority of the readers to whom the essay seems, by virtue of its purpose, to be addressed?)

It may seem a little bold for us to ask these questions about essays written by men who often know more about their subjects and about essays as a genre than we do. (Who are we, it might be asked, to judge the value of an interpretation of science in education by Alfred North Whitehead, one of the leading philosophers of this century?) But as readers we have a right to evaluate what we read. The writers expect us to. As students we have a responsibility to evaluate it, for this is part of our learning to distinguish the good and the true. If we can support our judgments with reasons based upon careful study, if we are willing to submit them to the test of discussion and to modify them when we are mistaken, we need not hesitate. Out of the practice of making judgments, out of the experience of reading that has preceded them, will come new knowledge, much pleasure, and invaluable training for the many decisions in life that lie ahead.

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## *Section One*

**F A C T S   A N D   E X P L A N A T I O N S**

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## Introductory Comment

OUR TECHNOLOGICAL culture has made us dependent upon the rapid exchange of facts and explanations, and writing devoted to this communication has come to be the most common today. We find it in the routine of daily life: in the instructions for using a car jack, baking a blueberry pie, assembling a prefabricated chair, or playing ice hockey; we find it in the technical papers which scientists and engineers write for one another; we find it in semitechnical articles which explain abstruse subjects to the general reader, in textbooks, in many news stories and columns, and in reference works like *The Dictionary of National Biography* and the encyclopedias.

The primary purpose of this writing is to show us what things are, what things have been, and what functional relations prevail among them. It is not primarily concerned with determining ethical, social, or aesthetic values or with expressing attitudes involving present and positive emotions directed at the ideas expressed. Since it treats rather limited aspects of life and since its attitudes are marked by a partial or complete absence of emotion, this writing tends to be rather abstract and impersonal.

The essays of this section represent some of the familiar forms of this writing. In general they emphasize facts and explanations more than interpretations and evaluations. Some are wholly factual and explanatory. Their tone, therefore, is usually neutral and unobtrusive, in keeping with their general purpose. The technical features focus our attention on the facts and explanations and clearly subordinate, and sometimes sup-

press, any associated ideas or emotions. Thus the point of view is often that of an automatic recorder or of an omniscient but remote and detached author, though occasionally, as in "Learning to Ski: Straight Running" and "The Art of Judging Music," the essayist speaks directly to us to offer an example from his personal experience or to give emphasis and authority to an idea. The level of usage tends to be formal and abstract, since an informal level sometimes suggests a tone that would involve us in unwanted attitudes and judgments of value. However, in "When Conan Doyle Was Sherlock Holmes" and "Flying Blind" the purpose is clearly to amuse as well as to inform us, and informal levels of usage facilitate the expression of ideas and tones needed to realize the double objective. Strongly connotative words and phrases, particularly those that form images, are generally less used than they are in the interpretive essays of the second section and the literary essays of the third. Rhythm is comparatively unimportant except in one or two cases, such as the conclusion of "Learning to Ski: Straight Running," where it gives emphasis to the summary of the principal ideas of the essay. On the other hand, the methods of logic are frequently used in the explanatory passages, inductive reasoning being used to infer generalizations from specific instances and deductive reasoning being used to explain the nature of a specific instance by the application of a generalization. The order of ideas in the paragraphs and the essays as a whole is usually inconspicuous, but it is nonetheless important to the clarity and compactness of the works. For the most part it is based upon a chronology of events described, as in "Guy Fawkes," or upon a simple pattern emphasizing causal or structural relations in the subject, as in "The Principles of Newspeak." "When Conan Doyle Was Sherlock Holmes" is a marked exception, however, for in it the order of ideas represents a careful dislocation of the chronology of the events described. The dislocation has been made for the sake of suspense.

# 1. THE FACTUAL ESSAY

## *Learning to Ski: Straight Running*

PETER LUNN

YOU SHOULD spend your first day on skis practising straight running, or 'schussing' as it is commonly called. This will enable you to find your feet and taste the thrill of speed. The slope on which you do this must have a good run-out, so that you come to a stop naturally and gently before encountering any obstacles. Your very first slope should be about 20 yards long and 10 degrees steep, and it will be much easier for you if there is a flat space at the top from which you can start down.

After you have schussed this successfully two or three times, you should graduate to a steeper and much longer slope, again with a good run-out; you should begin by schussing only the bottom part of this slope, and then start from a little higher each time you get down without falling. At first you will find it rather difficult to start from halfway up a slope instead of from a level space at the top. While you shuffle round to get your skis pointing straight down the slope, you will have to support yourself on your sticks so as not to shoot off before you are ready.

At the end of your first day you should be able to schuss a slope about 100 yards long and 10 to 20 degrees steep, provided

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From *A Ski-ing Primer*. Copyright 1948 by Peter Lunn. Published 1948 by Methuen & Co., Ltd.

that there are no big bumps in the way and no very sharp changes of gradient. Speed in itself presents no real difficulty, though it does require nerve till you get used to it; the difficulty comes later when you learn to control your speed.

When I am teaching beginners I ask them to remember only two things during their first day. The first is *Relax*. The second is *Keep your weight forward*.

*Relax*. The natural tendency when practising an unfamiliar sport is to stiffen every muscle in the body. You must fight against this tendency, and deliberately keep your body loose and relaxed.

Your stance should be upright, and you must particularly concentrate on keeping your knees slightly bent, so that your legs are resilient and not stiff. Knees are to the skier what shock absorbers are to a car. As the skier goes over a bump and his skis rise, the shock should be absorbed by his knees, so that his body continues to travel along the same plane.

*Keep your weight forward*. The natural reaction when you find yourself darting downhill, for the expert as well as for the beginner, is to lean backwards, as though one could thereby avoid whatever difficulties are coming. The vast majority of ski-ing falls, especially among beginners, are due to this lack of nerve; snow on a skier's back, like wounds on a warrior's, is the mark of a nervous nature.

Just as you have to fight the natural tendency to stiffen by consciously relaxing, so you must fight the natural tendency to lean back by getting your weight forward. You must do this by:

1. Forcing your shoulders forward.
2. Pressing your knees forward over the toes without lifting your heels off the skis.

What you must *not* do is to straighten your knees and lean forward from the waist.

If the ground steepens sharply ahead, you must make a particular effort to force your weight right forward. Otherwise



you will collapse backwards when the ground steepens and your skis accelerate.

*Further points about schussing.* As I have already said, you should concentrate during your first day on keeping your body relaxed and your weight forward. The following two points should be considered later.

1. *Keep your knees together.* To ski with the feet wide apart increases lateral stability, but makes the skis more difficult to control. During your first day or two, when you are concentrating on remaining upright and not on controlling your skis, it does not matter if you are running with your feet wide apart. In due course, however, you must start trying to keep your knees together. One knee—it does not matter which—should be slightly advanced and the rear one should be tucked into the side of it; your thighs should be pressed close together.

You do not want to worry about your feet. If your knees are in contact, your skis will be close enough together while yet allowing sufficient room for lateral play caused by unevennesses in the snow. Further, if your knees are close together and your feet slightly apart, then your skis will be held on their inside edges, which will keep them running straight and prevent them slithering from side to side.

2. *Use your hands as stabilizers.* You should hold your hands about a foot from your side; you will find then that they automatically make slight stabilizing movements, which help you to keep your balance. The fact that you are holding sticks in your hands greatly increases the effectiveness of your hands' tiny movements.

You must force your elbows backwards and upwards, as this helps to keep your shoulders hunched forward.

If you ski with your hands and elbows in the correct position, your ski sticks will automatically point backwards. It is very dangerous if one of them does happen to point *forwards*, because it may stick in the snow, in which case you can easily break a wrist or run your stomach on to it.

*Summary.* The four rules for schussing are:

1. Relax.
2. Keep your weight forward.
3. Keep your knees together.
4. Use your hands as stabilizers.

#### COMMENT

The purpose of "Learning to Ski: Straight Running" is to tell us how to do something. A plain, compact, well-integrated little essay, it goes directly to the point, follows a simple order of ideas based on the chronology of the process described, and concludes with a summary which drives home the main ideas of the piece with emphatic rhythms and short, crisp sentence fragments. Only ideas directly serving the limited purpose have been included. As a description of skiing and particularly of the exciting experience of straight running for the first time, the essay is quite limited and abstract. There is no mention of the roar of the wind in one's ears, of the stinging cold that snatches one's breath away, of the camaraderie among skiers, or of the joys of plunging in seemingly weightless flight through arches of sunlight. We have only to compare the essay with a story such as Ernest Hemingway's "Cross Country Snow" to see how much has been omitted. The omitted details—and the attitudes and value judgments they might help to express—are irrelevant to the purpose. But the facts and explanations which have been included are anything but dull. They have a high degree of intrinsic interest which the forceful presentation helps to bring out.

The tone of the essay seems at first to be impersonal and neutral, but gradually we become aware that it is not. The apparent impersonalness and neutrality of the tone help to focus our attention upon the instructions offered. They arouse no meaningless and distracting feelings, and they discourage any tendency to add random associated ideas and images to the total meaning of the essay. At the same time certain attitudes appropriate to the purpose are unobtrusively expressed. Without breaking the illusion of impersonalness

and neutrality, the essay makes us receptive to the instructions by suggesting the firm authority of a friendly, if somewhat remote, instructor and by quietly fostering an eagerness to attempt the first "schuss." By dropping little hints of the instructor's respect for courage and his dislike of clumsiness and timidity, the essay arouses our determination to put down our fears and do well.

The point of view and the level of usage fit the tone and purpose well. Lunn writes in the first person, which permits him to address the reader directly with all the force of the imperative mode. By using this mode and by referring to himself only twice (which gives emphasis to the ideas presented where the references are made), he focuses the reader's interest upon learning to ski and does not permit attention to wander to himself as a potentially interesting personality; yet his authority as teacher is constantly felt behind his remarks. The usage level is that of well-bred conversation, which is informal but without a great many colloquialisms or slang terms. The level is appropriate to a discussion of a sport whose traditions combine the sportsman's usual informality with just a little bit of formal ritual and courtesy. It is also appropriate to the fact that while the beginner ought to be earnest about his efforts to learn, skiing is not a solemn but a lighthearted affair pursued for the fun of it.

The level allows for connotative words and phrases ("Taste the thrill of speed," "darting downhill," and so forth) which suggest enough of the excitement of skiing to stimulate interest but not enough to distract from the central facts and explanations. It also allows a homely illustration of the use of the bent knee and its effects in terms of the familiar principle of the shock absorber on an automobile. Connotations suggest the attitude toward the awkward and fearful skier when the essay warns us not to "collapse backward" (which is so much less dignified than "fall backward" and less gaily flippant than "tumble backward") and not to allow our skis to begin "slithering from side to side"; or when, in a vivid, effective image, it compares a timid skier with a cowardly soldier: "Snow on a skier's back, like wounds on a warrior's is a mark of a nervous nature." There is a wealth of polite contempt in the word "nervous."

Unless we particularly want to learn to ski, we probably do not find this a very important essay. But it is a good example of a familiar type, being clear, informative, and interesting. It might well serve as a model for our own efforts to give simple instructions and explanations.

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# When Conan Doyle Was Sherlock Holmes

THE CASE OF GEORGE EDALJI

JOHN DICKSON CARR

IN STAFFORDSHIRE, from the potteries on the north to the mining districts on the south, they were trooping to work on that smoky August morning. The village of Great Wyrley, less than twenty miles from Birmingham, lay in an area partly agricultural and partly mining. The Great Wyrley Colliery, whose morning shift began at six o'clock, stood some distance away amid fields and slap-heaps and coal-tips.

The night before had been stormy, with heavy rain-squalls which began half an hour before midnight and ended at dawn. The field near the colliery, its yellowish-red soil a mixture of clay and sand, was slimy underfoot. A boy named Henry Garrett, on his way to work at 6:20 A.M., stumbled over what had been done in that field.

In a morass of blood, still alive, lay a pony belonging to the colliery. The pony had been ripped up the belly with some very sharp blade. It had not been disemboweled; the cut, though sharp-slit, had not gone deeply enough. The pony moved feebly, and blood still trickled from the wound.

"Blood," young Henry Garrett testified, "was dropping pretty freely."

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From *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* by John Dickson Carr. Reprinted by permission of Harper and Brothers. Copyright, 1949, by John Dickson Carr.

Meanwhile, he yelled for help. That yell brought a horde of other miners hurrying to see the pony. It also brought the police. Twenty constables and plainclothesmen, drawn from all districts, had been patrolling these lanes all night as they had been doing every night for some time. It was the eighth case of animal mutilation in six months.

Between February and August, in that year 1903, horses and cows and sheep died at the hand of some adroit maniac who seemed all but invisible. At the same time, the police received a spate of jeering letters. The letters were signed by various forged or false names. But the most important of them, with which we have to deal here, bore the "signature" of a lad at Walsall Grammar School, six miles from Great Wyrley; and this boy was proved by all sides concerned to have had nothing whatever to do with them.

The anonymous letters did not make pleasant reading. A sort of jumping-jack mania danced through them. In his first letter the writer made several glowing references to the sea; and he smacked his lips, with gluttonous relish, over the details of the mutilations. He said he was the member of a gang, wrongly accusing a number of people as accomplices; and how they enjoyed ripping up cattle! Of one of them: "*He has got eagle eyes, and his ears is as sharp as a razor, and he is as fleet of foot as a fox, and as noiseless, and he crawls on all fours up to the poor beasts. . . .*" Or again, chortling:

There will be merry times at Wyrley in November when they start on little girls, for they will do twenty wenches like the horses before next March.

This last threat added horror to wrath in the seething community. Then, on the morning of August 18, the pony was found dying in the field. Somebody had done it again, although twenty alert policemen had been patrolling the district and three of them were actually watching the field.

It was like Jack the Ripper in the countryside, a Jack the

Ripper with skill in handling animals before he slashed. Inspector Campbell, of the Staffordshire County Constabulary, examined the pony and made up his mind.

Inspector Campbell quite honestly believed, as did all his colleagues up to the Chief Constable, that he knew who was guilty. He believed he had known it all along. Half a mile away from the field—beyond the raised line of the London and North Western Railway—lay the vicarage of Great Wyrley. Inspector Campbell set out for the vicarage with several of his men. If he found any evidence, he meant to arrest the vicar's son.

Now the Reverend Shapurji Edalji, who had been for nearly thirty years vicar of the parish, was a Parsee. That is, he was born of a sect from India; he was, in popular parlance, a Black Man; and therefore alien and sinister. How had a Parsee come to be a Church of England clergyman? Nobody knew. But the Reverend Shapurji Edalji had married an Englishwoman, Miss Charlotte Stoneman, and the eldest of their three children was the twenty-seven-year-old George Edalji.

ii.

George Edalji, with his dark skin and his curiously bulging eyes, practiced as a solicitor in Birmingham. Each morning he took the seven-twenty train to his office there; each evening he returned to the vicarage at half-past six. George Edalji had grown up small and frail, nervous and reserved, a brilliant student. At Mason College, later the University of Birmingham, he had passed his final examinations with honors; he had taken prizes from the Law Society and written a well-known handbook on railway law. His very virtues made the young Black Man, with the goblin eyes, seem far more terrible than his father.

"'E's *funny*," ran the muttered comment. "Don't drink or smoke. 'Ardly seems to notice you, even, when 'e looks straight at you. And what about last time?"

It was "last time" which had started all the rumor.

Years before, between 1892 and the end of 1895, beginning at a time when George was at Rugeley School, there had been an outburst of anonymous letters and ugly hoaxes. Some of these missives went to outsiders, including one to the headmaster of Walsall Grammar School. But for the most part the persecution was directed at the Reverend Shapurji Edalji. Letters cursing his wife and his daughter and in particular his elder son were slipped under door-sills or through windows at the vicarage. The vicar was also deviled with practical jokes.

Bogus advertisements signed with his name were inserted in newspapers. Postcards also signed with his name were sent to various other clergymen. One clergyman, far away in Essex, was astounded to receive, from "S. Edalji," the following:

Unless you apologize at once and by telegram for the outrageous hints you gave in your sermons concerning my Chastity, I shall expose your adultery and rape.

Now this sort of thing might have been merely funny. But anonymous malice is seldom funny to the man who experiences it. Under cover of darkness, somebody strewed the Edaljis' lawn with old spoons, old knives, the refuse of dustbins. On one occasion a large key, stolen from Walsall Grammar School, was left on the doorstep. And the malignant amusement went on for more than three years.

But the Chief Constable of Staffordshire, Captain the Honorable George Alexander Anson, kept a stolid face. Captain Anson was one of those people who thought Black Men less than the beasts. Captain Anson believed that the culprit was none other than young George Edalji, hounding his own family. The vicar protested that this was a manifest absurdity, because letters had been pushed under the door of the vicarage at a time when George (as his father's and mother's eyesight bore witness) had been in the house. The Chief Constable remained adamant. About the key left on the doorstep he wrote:



"I may say at once that I shall not pretend to believe any protestations of ignorance which your son may make about the key." Later Captain Anson declared that he hoped to get for the offender "a dose of penal servitude." Still the hoaxing antics continued.

Abruptly, at the end of December 1895, the persecution ceased. There was a last bogus advertisement, signed S. Edalji, in a Blackpool newspaper. Afterwards a great balm of silence descended on Great Wyrley—and it lasted for seven years without a break, until 1903.

Then somebody began ripping horses and cattle. Each animal bore a long, shallow wound which caused a spurting effusion of blood, but did not penetrate far enough to pierce the gut. Who attacked the cattle?

"George Edalji," thought the authorities. Special constables swarmed into the district. Captain Anson's instructions were to watch the vicarage and see whether anybody left it at night. They did this before their receipt of the second outburst of anonymous letters, from which we have quoted with, "*He has got eagle eyes, and his ears is as sharp as a razor. . .*" These letters, finally, repeatedly accused George Edalji of being a leading member in the cattle-slitting gang.

Mr. Edalji is going to Brum . . . about how it's to be carried on with so many detectives about, and I believe they are going to do some cows in the daytime instead of at night.

Who wrote these letters, according to the Chief Constable?

George Edalji himself. (Presumably he wanted to wreck his own career as a solicitor.)

That was the position, on the morning of August 18, when Inspector Campbell went to the vicarage after the maiming of the pony. Inspector Campbell arrived there, with several constables, at eight o'clock. George Edalji had already left for his office in Birmingham. But George's mother and sister were downstairs at breakfast. As soon as they saw the police-

men's shadows across the colored-glass panel of the front door, Mrs. Edalji and her daughter knew what to expect.

"I must ask you," said Inspector Campbell, "to show me your son's clothing." (There were bound to be widespread bloodstains.) "Also," he continued, "any weapon that might have been used in this."

The police found nothing more in the nature of a weapon than a case of four razors, belonging to the vicar, which razors were proved chemically to be free of bloodstains. But they did find a pair of George Edalji's boots, wet and stained with black mud. They found a pair of blue serge trousers, stained with black mud round the lower edges. They found an old house coat, whose sleeve bore whitish and darkish stains which might prove to be saliva and blood from the dying pony.

"This coat," declared Inspector Campbell, "is damp."

The vicar, who by this time had joined the others downstairs in his study, passed a hand over the coat and denied that it was damp. The inspector further asserted that he saw horsehairs adhering to the coat. Shapurji Edalji, holding the coat close to the window, hotly denied that there were any horsehairs, and challenged his companion to produce any. This protest had already been made by Mrs. Edalji and Miss Maud Edalji.

"It's a roving!" insisted the latter, meaning a thread. "I'm sure what you saw is a roving!"

In any event, as Arthur Conan Doyle was later to point out, the police did not secure any specimens of this hair and seal them in an envelope. The house coat, together with a waistcoat belonging to it, was removed from the vicarage without further comment. Meanwhile, the pony had been killed to put it out of pain. A strip of its hide was cut off, and then—very carelessly, to say the least—packed in the same bundle as George Edalji's clothes. Not until four o'clock did a disinterested witness, Dr. Butter, the police surgeon, examine the clothes. Whether or not there had been horsehairs on the coat at a previous time, there were certainly horsehairs on it now.

Dr. Butter found twenty-nine of them on the coat, and five on the waistcoat.

It was as well to have this ace of trumps, since the other evidence dwindled badly. Dr. Butter reported that the whitish and darkish stains on the coat were food stains, with one possible exception. On the right-hand cuff were two spots, "each about the size of a threepennybit," which showed traces of mammalian blood. These might have come from a pony, or they might have been splashes from the gravy of underdone meat. In any case, the spots were not fresh.

iii.

They arrested George Edalji late in the same day. They found him at his office in Birmingham, looking ill when they arrived. Edalji, conscious of his physical disabilities, felt himself penned in a corner. He was alternately sharp-tongued and sunk in utter despair.

"I'm not surprised at this," he said on his way to the police station. "I have been expecting it for some time." These words were noted down and used at his trial as evidence of a guilty conscience.

"Will you give an account of your movements on the night of August 17, when the pony was mutilated?"

George Edalji's testimony, then and at various times afterwards, is easily gathered together in a summary.

"I returned home to the vicarage from my office," he said, "at half-past six in the evening. I transacted some business at home. Then I walked along the main road to the boot-maker's at Bridgetown, and got there a little later than half-past eight. I was then wearing a blue serge coat." This was confirmed by John Hand, the bootmaker. "My supper wouldn't be ready until half-past nine. So I walked round for a while. Several persons must have seen me. It had been raining during the day, though it was not raining then."

(And thus, noted Conan Doyle, accounting for the mud on

the trouser legs and on the wet boots. It was the black mud of the roadway. Surely they could make an elementary distinction between the black mud of a village road and the yellowish-red soil, a mixture of sand and clay, in the fields roundabout?)

Meanwhile:

"I returned to the vicarage," persisted Edalji, "at nine-thirty. I had supper, and went to bed. I sleep in the same bedroom as my father, and I have been sleeping there for seventeen years. I did not leave that bedroom until twenty minutes to seven on the following morning."

That night of August 17 had been wild and wet, blowing with rain from before midnight until dawn. Shapurji Edalji, a light sleeper, racked with worry and lumbago, had been restless all night. "And," he added, "I always keep my bedroom door locked. If my son had left at any time, I should have known it. He did not do so."

When the news spread of George Edalji's arrest, after all these months of nocturnal cattle-slitting, popular fury boiled over. The young Black Man was in danger of being lynched. The police carried him in a cab to appear before the magistrates at Cannock; a crowd in the street attacked the cab, and tore the door from its hinges.

"Many and wonderful," said a reporter from the Birmingham *Express and Star*, "were the theories I heard propounded in the local alehouses as to why Edalji had gone forth in the night to slay cattle, and a widely accepted idea was that he made nocturnal sacrifices to strange gods."

On October 20, 1903, Edalji was brought to trial. He was tried at the Court of Quarter Sessions, before a county justice so lacking in legal knowledge that a barrister was hired to advise him. At the trial, too, the prosecution altered its whole line of attack.

The original theory of the police, as presented before the magistrates at Cannock, was that Edalji had committed the

crime between eight and nine-thirty in the evening; that is, during the time covered by his visit to the bootmaker's and his walk before supper. But this theory had holes in it. Witnesses had seen him during that walk. The pony, when discovered next morning, was still bleeding; and a veterinary surgeon, who saw it afterwards, testified that this fresh wound could not have been made at any time before two-thirty in the morning.

Thus the case—as actually and finally presented to the jury—did a complete about-turn. Edalji, it was claimed, had acted between two and three o'clock in the morning. He had slipped out of the vicar's bedroom into the rain. Escaping the lurking police, he had walked half a mile, crossed the fenced line of the railway, mutilated the pony, and returned home by a more roundabout way through fields and hedges and ditches.

Well, hadn't the police been watching the vicarage on the night the crime was committed? The answer of the police, in effect, was, "Yes and no." On the previous night, stated Sergeant Robinson, there had been six men watching it. But, on the night in question, they could not be sure. There had been no specific order to watch the vicarage; only what might be called a general order. Then a powerful impression was made on the jury by the evidence (not mentioned before the magistrates) of Footprints on the Scene of the Crime.

A constable, it was stated, compared one of George Edalji's boots with footprints going to and coming from the place where the pony had lain. True, the whole ground around had already been trampled in all directions by the footprints of miners and sightseers. (Here the author of Sherlock Holmes was to utter a groan.) But the constable had found some likely-looking prints. Taking Edalji's boot, he pressed it into the soil *beside* one of these prints—thus making an impression and, incidentally, getting yellow-red mud on that single boot. He measured these impressions and judged them to be the same.

"Were these footprints photographed?"

"No, sir."

"Was a cast made of them?"

"No, sir."

"Then where is the evidence? Why didn't you dig up a clod of earth, so as to get a perfect impression?"

"Well, sir, the ground was too soft in one place and too hard in another."

"But how did you measure the footprints?"

"With bits of stick, sir. And a straw."

But it is time to end this tragicomedy of the trial. A handwriting expert, Mr. Thomas Gurrin, went into the box and gave it as his opinion that Edalji had written the letters accusing himself of cattle-maiming. Mr. Gurrin was the same authority whose expert testimony had helped send an innocent man, Adolf Beck, to prison in 1896. In this case the jury found George Edalji guilty. The layman-judge, emphatically denying that justice would have been served better by transferring the case to London out of a prejudiced area, then sentenced Edalji to seven years' penal servitude.

"Lord have mercy on us!" cried the prisoner's mother.

That was late on October 1903. It was true that there had been another case of horse-maiming while Edalji remained locked up awaiting trial, but counsel for the prosecution explained it as being more work of the "Wyrley gang" to confuse the issue of Edalji's guilt. In November arrived a further anonymous letter, and another horse was killed. Edalji had disappeared into prison, serving his time first at Lewes and then at Portland. As a last unconscious stroke which would have pleased M. Anatole France, his prison work at Lewes was the part-making of feed bags for horses.

Late in 1906, when he had served three years of his sentence, there was an occurrence as mysterious to him as any in the case. He was released from prison.

He was not pardoned. Nobody told him why he was released. He remained under police supervision, as a discharged con-

vict. His friends, headed by Mr. R. D. Yelverton, formerly Chief Justice of the Bahamas, had never ceased to urge the weakness of the evidence against him; at the time of his conviction, a petition to the Home Office for reconsideration was signed by ten thousand people, including several hundred lawyers. The petition had no effect. Recently Mr. Yelverton had taken it up again, strongly aided by the magazine *Truth*. But the Home Office, whatever the reason for the action they took, offered no explanation. The gates of Portland clanged open; that was all.

"And what," asked the convict, "am I to do now?" It was a bleak prospect. "I have been struck off the roll of solicitors, naturally. In any case, I could hardly practice my profession while still under the supervision of the police. But am I innocent, or am I guilty? They won't tell me."

iv.

"They won't, eh?" said Conan Doyle. For one evening Conan Doyle had found in his mail an envelope of press-clippings dealing with the case, now three years old. He had begun to read the clippings idly. The case was mysterious, it was sensational, it was as complex with bizarre clues as any of his own detective stories. But what had caught and held his attention was the fact that the clippings had been sent to him, with a cry for help, by the man most deeply concerned in this business. If this man's statements were true, then the case needed further investigation.

To this case Conan Doyle devoted eight months' intensive work, between December 1906 and August 1907: doing no work of his own during that time; paying all the expenses involved; and, incidentally, solving the mystery of who was guilty. To fight the case, he considered, was a matter of simple justice.

"Either this man is guilty," he wrote, "or he is not. If he is, he deserves every day of his seven years. If he is not, then we must have apology, pardon, and restitution."

Sending for all available evidence, and writing to everyone who could testify in the matter, he studied the results over many ounces of tobacco before arranging an interview with George Edalji. Early in January, 1907, he met the young man in the foyer of the Grand Hotel, Charing Cross.

"The first sight which I ever had of Mr. George Edalji," wrote Conan Doyle, in the bombshell he exploded a week later, "the first sight which I ever had of Mr. George Edalji was enough to convince me of the extreme improbability of his being guilty, and to suggest some of the reasons why he had been suspected.

"He had come to my hotel by appointment; but I had been delayed, and he was passing the time by reading the paper. I recognized my man by his dark face, so I stood and observed him. He held the paper close to his eyes and rather sideways, proving. . . ."

At this point, still watching, the newcomer crossed the foyer and extended his hand.

"You're Mr. Edalji," he said, and introduced himself. "Don't you suffer from astigmatic myopia?"

We have no indication of the young lawyer's feelings on being greeted in this way; but we know his replies as the newcomer went on:

"It's only that I once studied to be an eye surgeon. The astigmatism is marked, and I think there's a very high degree of myopia. Don't you wear glasses?"

"I never have, Sir Arthur. I've gone to two ophthalmic surgeons, and they can't fit me with glasses that are any use. They say. . . ."

"But surely this point was raised at your trial?"

"Sir Arthur," replied the other with desperate sincerity, "I wanted to call an optician as a witness. You can verify that. But my legal advisers said the evidence against me was so palpably ridiculous that they wouldn't trouble."

Edalji, Conan Doyle reflected, would be more than half-



blind in full daylight, would have to grope his way at dusk through any locality with which he was not perfectly familiar, and at night-fall would be helpless. The idea of such a man constantly scouring the countryside at night—to say nothing of the fatal night, in pouring rain, when Edalji had to make a circular tour of a mile without *any* of his clothes being sopping wet—this idea, he decided, lacked elementary good sense.

Could Edalji be shamming blindness? He did not believe so. But every step must be made secure. He sent Edalji to a well-known eye specialist, Kenneth Scott, who reported eight diopters of myopia: a worse case than the investigator had thought. He was already in correspondence with Edalji's father. He went down to Great Wyrley so that he could investigate and question witnesses on the spot. The details he now had in his hands.

On January 11, 1907, the first installment of his eighteen-thousand-word statement, "The Case of Mr. George Edalji," appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*.

First he held up the evidence against Edalji, and carefully tore it into small pieces along lines which have been indicated. Then, hating color prejudice as much as he hated racial or religious prejudice, he cut loose. It was easy, he said, to excuse the feelings of uneducated countrymen towards the strange-looking Edalji. It was not so easy to excuse that English gentleman, the Chief Constable, who had cherished his dislike since 1892 and infected the whole police force.

This, said Conan Doyle, was a kind of squalid Dreyfus case. In each affair you had a rising young professional man ruined by authority over a matter of forged handwriting.

Captain Dreyfus, in France, had been made scapegoat because he was a Jew. Edalji, in England, has been made scapegoat because he was a Parsee. England, the home of liberty, had cried out in horror when such things happened in France. What did we have to say when it happened in our own country?

And what had been the attitude of the Home Office, under two administrations, when a legal authority like Mr. Yelverton presented evidence that Edalji had been wrongly sent to prison?

"Evidently," he wrote bitterly, "the authorities were shaken, and compromised with their consciences." After three years they turned the victim loose; but without pardon. Serenely they cried, "Go free," while adding, "You're still guilty." But the matter could not rest there. Who had made this illogical decision? And on what grounds? He, Conan Doyle, deprecated a public outcry:

"But the door is shut in our faces," he concluded. "Now we turn to the last tribunal of all, a tribunal which never errs when the facts are laid before them, and we ask the public of Great Britain whether this thing is to go on."

It would be unnecessary to write, "Sensation." George Edalji, overnight, became the talk of the country. The columns of the *Daily Telegraph* bulged with controversial letters. Another legal authority, Sir George Lewis—students of criminology will remember him in the Bravo poisoning case and the Hatton Garden diamond robbery—agitated for Edalji's innocence. "Who," the query rose to a roar, "was responsible for making the decision of free-but-guilty?"

The Home Office did not explain this; or, indeed, explain anything. The Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, son of the late Grand Old Man, courteously said that Edalji's case would receive full investigation. Unfortunately, there were difficulties. There was as yet no such thing as a Court of Criminal Appeal, though the need for such a court had been under consideration since the affair of Adolf Beck. The question, therefore, was how to get the case re-opened.

"Do you mean," demanded the man in the pub, "that Edalji's sentence has got to stand because there's no legal machinery for dealing with it?"

As regarded a re-trial, yes. But this (the Home Office quite

agreed) was an exceptional set of circumstances. They were prepared to appoint a Committee of three unbiased men: this Committee to meet in a secret session, to examine all data which should be presented, and to recommend what course should be taken by the authorities.

"Excellent!" said Conan Doyle. He did not mind delay, because he believed he could name the guilty person. Occupied with heavy correspondence, and with secret visits to the Wyrley neighborhood, he was gathering proof which he could put before the Committee.

"The case against my quarry," he wrote to his mother as early as January 29th, "is already very strong. But I have five separate lines of inquiry on foot by which I hope to make it overwhelming. It will be a great stroke if I can lay him by the heels."

Then *he* began to receive wild letters from the merry joker-cum-cattle-slasher of the Wyrley district. They dropped into his letter box like feebly-venomed snakes.

I know from a detective of Scotland Yard that if you write to Gladstone and say you find Edalji is guilty after all they will make you a lord next year. Is it not better to be a lord than to run the risk of losing kidneys and liver. Think of all the ghoolish (*sic*) murders that are committed why then should you escape?

There could be no doubt these letters were from the joker. Aside from any question of handwriting, there were too many intimate local references, too much harping on exactly the same themes which had obsessed and tortured the joker for years. As an example:

There was no education to be got at Walsall when that bloody swine (name given) was high school boss. He got the bloody bullet after the governors were sent letters about him. Ha ha.

Always the joker screamed that Edalji, Edalji, Edalji had written all abusive letters.

The proof of what I tell you is in the writing he put in the papers when they loosed him out of prison where he ought to have been kept along with his dad and all black and yellow faced Jews . . . Nobody could copy his writing like that, you blind fool.

More than malice breathed out of it. This man, Conan Doyle had long ago decided, belonged in an asylum. But he was eager to get each scrawl, so that he could compare them with specimens of all the other letters dating back to the beginning of the whole affair.

"On the evidence of handwriting," he said, "I have come to one conclusion. I contend that the anonymous letters of 1892 to 1895 were the work of two persons: one a decently educated man, the other a foul-mouthed semi-literate boy. I contend that the anonymous letters of 1903 were nearly all written by that same foul-mouthed boy, then grown into a man in his twenties. On further evidence I contend that Foul-mouth not only wrote the letters, but did the mutilations.

"But to say this is to put the end at the beginning. Let us go back. Let us take the facts in the Wyrley mystery as they are presented to us, and see what inferences we can draw from them.

"At the beginning, one point is so obvious that I wonder it has escaped notice. This is the extraordinary long gap between the two sets of letters. Letters, childish hoaxes, abound up to late December of '95. Then, for nearly seven years, *nobody* gets an abusive letter. To me this did not suggest that the culprit had changed his whole character and habits overnight, reverting to them with equal malice in 1903. It suggested absence; that someone had been away during that time.

"Away—where? Look at the very first letter in the outburst of 1903. In it the writer makes no less than three glowing allusions to the sea. He recommends an apprentice's life at sea; his mind is full of it. Taken in conjunction with the long

absence, may we suppose that he has gone to sea and recently returned?

"Note, too, that the final hoax against the Edaljis in '95 is a bogus advertisement in a Blackpool paper. This is perhaps coincidence; anyone may go to Blackpool for a holiday; but it is also the pleasure-resort of Liverpool—a seaport.

"Suppose, for the sake of argument, we take this line as a working hypothesis. Where are we to look first for traces of this hypothetical person? Surely in the records of Walsall Grammar School!

"Walsall Grammar School, clearly, is the connecting link between the two sets of letters. In Group A, a scurrilous message is sent to the headmaster of that time. A large key, stolen from Walsall Grammar School, is left on the Edaljis' doorstep. In Group B, the false signature on the letters is actually that of a pupil at Walsall. I myself, in 1907, receive a letter which breaks out into irrelevant ravings against the headmaster of fifteen years ago.

"My first step in the enquiry lay at Walsall. I must inquire whether there had been at the school, during the early nineties, a boy who (a) had a particular grudge against the headmaster, (b) was innately vicious, and (c) subsequently went to sea. I took this obvious step. And I got on the track of my man at once."

Such was his own explanation to the Home Office; the above deductions, omitting the final paragraph, he later published in the *Daily Telegraph*.

v.

Meanwhile, between February and April, his five lines of inquiry tightened. He was able to give the Home Office Committee, with the testimony of each witness appended, the following dossier:

At Walsall, from 1890 to 1892, there had been a boy named

Peter Hudson.\* Hudson, expelled at the age of thirteen because nobody could handle him, showed peculiar tastes even then. He forged letters, very clumsily. His particular taste was for using a knife. In a railway-carriage, on the way to school, he would turn over the cushions and rip up the underside, so that horsehair should emerge.

More than once Peter Hudson's father had to pay compensation when his son cut the straps on railway-carriage windows. At Walsall there was one boy, Fred Brookes, with whom Peter Hudson had a bitter feud; and this boy's family were deluged with anonymous letters during the period of 1892 to 1895. After expulsion from school, Hudson was apprenticed to a butcher, thus learning to use a knife on animals.

At the end of December 1895, he was sent to sea as an apprentice. His ship (name of ship, captain, and owner given) sailed from Liverpool. Early in 1903 he returned from the sea permanently, and was living in the neighborhood of Great Wyrley during all the time of the attacks on animals.

Furthermore, for ten months of the year 1902 he had served aboard a cattle ship. He knew how to handle animals: a vital necessity, Conan Doyle pointed out, for the approach of the deft, nimble horse-slasher. "Compare this man," he wrote, "with the studious and purblind Edalji." But from Hudson's service in the cattle ship emerged clinching evidence.

In July 1903, a certain Mrs. Emily Smallking visited the house, its back to the open fields, where Peter Hudson lived. Both Mrs. Smallking and her husband had long been friends of the family. On this occasion the fever over the cattle-maiming had grown high. Mr. Smallking spoke of it to Peter Hudson, who grew gleefully confidential. He went to a cupboard,

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\* This, of course, is a compound name derived from two sea-faring characters in the stories. The real name of "Peter Hudson," who may still be alive, will be found in a copy of Conan Doyle's Home Office dossier, pasted into the scrapbook labeled *The Edalji Case, 1907*.

took out a horse lancet of unusually large size, and held it up.

"Look," he said. "This is what they kill the cattle with."

Mrs. Smallking felt a trifle sick. "Put it away!" she said. And then, hastily: "You don't want me to think you're the man, do you?"

Peter Hudson put away the horse lancet. Conan Doyle later obtained possession of it. How he managed this we had better not inquire; but here is the continuation of his dossier to the Home Office.

"Now the wounds in all the outrages up to August 18," he wrote, "were of a very peculiar character. In every case there was a shallow incision; it had cut through skin and muscles, but had not penetrated the gut. Had any ordinary cutting weapon been used, it must certainly in *some* instance have penetrated far enough to pierce the gut with its point or edge. Note that the blade of the lancet is very sharp. Yet it could never penetrate more than superficially. I submit this very large horse lancet, obtained by Peter Hudson from the cattle ship, as being the only kind of instrument which could have committed all the crimes."

Up and up he built his case, demonstrating that John Hudson, Peter's elder brother, had collaborated in the letters of 1892-1895; and that the Edalji family had long been the butt of both Hudsons' dislike. In fact, some of his strongest and most damning points cannot be quoted here, because they would too closely identify "Peter Hudson." But officialdom read them.

While he waited for the report of the Committee-to-Examine-Evidence—consisting of Sir Arthur Wilson, Sir Alfred De Rutzen, and Mr. John L. Wharton—Conan Doyle's confidence grew. Justice *would* be done. He felt certain of it. Besides, this was to be his miraculous year, his year of fulfillment: In September, he would be married to Jean Leckie.

"And," he wrote, "we will ask Edalji to the wedding."

Late in May the recommendation of the Committee, and the decision of the Home Secretary, were made public. A Government publication, "Presented to both Houses by Command of His Majesty," set forth their findings. Mr. Yelverton, Edalji's first defender, read it thunderstruck.

*George Edalji, said the Committee, had been wrongly convicted of horse-maiming; they could not agree with the verdict of the jury. On the other hand, they saw no reason to doubt that Edalji had written the anonymous letters. "Assuming him to be an innocent man, he had to some extent brought his troubles on himself." Therefore he would be granted a pardon, but denied any compensation for three years in prison because he had brought his troubles on himself.*

This was too much. In the House of Commons, questions flew at the Home Secretary like poisoned darts. The Law Society, demonstrating the opinion of the legal profession, immediately re-admitted Edalji to the roll of solicitors with leave to practice. The *Daily Telegraph* raised a subscription of three hundred pounds for him. And Conan Doyle, with murder in his eye, stalked into the Home Office.

"Do you maintain," he demanded, "that George Edalji is raving mad?"

"There is no indication to that effect."

"Has there ever been any suggestion that he is mad?"

"No, there has not."

"Then do you seriously suggest that he sent *me* seven violent letters threatening my life?"

"We can do no more than refer you to the Committee's report, page six. 'These letters,' they state, 'can have only a very remote bearing on whether Edalji was rightly convicted in 1903.' We regret that this must be final."

It was not final. Again Conan Doyle charged into battle, first with *Daily Telegraph* articles called "Who Wrote the Letters?" and then letters of his own through June to August. "I won't leave the job half finished!" he wrote. He secured, by



means best known to himself, specimens of Peter Hudson's and John Hudson's handwriting. These, with the anonymous letters, he submitted to Dr. Lindsay Johnson, Europe's foremost authority on handwriting, who had been called by Maître Labori in the Dreyfus trial. By means of internal evidence, backed up by Dr. Lindsay Johnson's verdict, he demonstrated that Peter Hudson was the principal author and John Hudson the secondary author.

Officially, this did not matter. The authorities, sticking together, announced blandly that there was no case against Peter Hudson either as writer or cattle-maimer; and there could be no further investigation. It is only necessary to add that the merry joker, when Edalji had long been forgotten, was still writing an occasional mad threat in the Midlands in the year 1913.

On September 18, 1907, Conan Doyle was married to Miss Jean Leckie, and at the wedding George Edalji was a welcome and honored guest. In that same year, largely owing to the case of Adolf Beck and the case of George Edalji, a Court of Criminal Appeal was at last established. It mingled with other modern portents: Signor Marconi bridging the ocean with wireless, and Mr. Farman staying for nearly an hour in the air with a biplane flying-machine. But, as we look back on Conan Doyle's detective work in the case of George Edalji, we can ask a question to which the answer will be self-evident.

Who *was* Sherlock Holmes?

## 2. THE FACTUAL HISTORICAL ESSAY

### *Norumbega: New England Xanadu*

SIGMUND DIAMOND

DOUBTLESS it is the legendary character of Norumbega that accounts for its will-o'-the-wisp quality. To some explorers and cartographers, it was a large river; to others, a great city; to still others, a vast expanse of land ranging from Florida on the south to New France on the north. And to some it was all of these. Among them and among later historians there is no agreement as to the location of the city and river of Norumbega, though the area of disagreement has been so narrowed that the main contenders are the Hudson River and the Penobscot River. Above all, there is no agreement as to the origin of the word itself, and the effort to penetrate into the etymological mysteries of its origin is made more difficult by the innumerable forms in which it appears.<sup>1</sup>

In one stroke Professor Eben Norton Horsford solved the problem of the origin of the word and the problem of the Norse settlement of Vineland. *Norumbega*, he claimed, is the Indian pronunciation of *Norbega*, the word for Norway. The

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<sup>1</sup> Hodge lists 22 separate forms of the word *Norumbega*. Frederick Webb Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2, Washington, 1910), pp. 84-85.

Indians could not pronounce the sound of *B* without putting the sound of *M* before it. Hence *Norbega* became *Nor'mbega*. The site of the Norse colony he placed at Watertown, Massachusetts, on the Charles River. To Horsford, therefore, the existence of the Norumbega tradition was one of the permanent effects of the establishment of a Norse colony in North America.<sup>2</sup>

But most historians, perhaps less interested than Horsford in allaying the 'blind skepticism, amounting practically to inverted ambition, that would deprive Massachusetts of the glory of holding the landfall of Leif Ericson, and at the same time the seat of the earliest colony of Europeans in America' <sup>3</sup>—most historians have rejected his conclusions for the reason that there is no positive evidence to support them and that they rest on the weak foundation of an alleged correspondence in language.<sup>4</sup>

Other investigators have claimed that the word is of French origin, a corruption of the phrase *L'anormée berge*—grand scarp—referring to the Palisades along the Hudson River.<sup>5</sup> Jean Allefonsce, who sailed up the Norumbega River in 1542, reported that it was salty for ninety miles inland from the coast. So, too, is the Hudson River. Hence the Hudson River is the

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<sup>2</sup> Eben Norton Horsford, *Sketch of the Norse Discovery of America* (Boston, 1891). One of Professor Horsford's followers even published a kind of street-guide to Norumbega: 'A short ride of less than a mile in the horse-cars, up Brattle Street to Mt. Auburn Station, or by carriage up Mt. Auburn Street to Brattle Street and Belmont Street, thence to Cushing Street; and, turning down the first street to the left, the splendid amphitheatre lies before us. . . . Here, perchance, came the Althing or General Assembly, to maintain a republican form of government such as was held at home.' Elizabeth G. Shepard, *A Guide-Book to Norumbega and Vineland* (Boston, 1893), pp. 32-33.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Rasmus B. Anderson, 'The Norsemen in America,' in Anderson, ed., *The Norse Discovery of America* (London, 1907), p. 306.

<sup>4</sup> Justin Winsor, ed., *Narrative and Critical History of America* (Boston, 1886), I, 98; Julius Emil Olson, *Review of the Problem of the Northmen and the Site of Norumbega* (Chicago, 1890), pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-299.

Norumbega and the site of the city of Norumbega is either at Albany or on Manhattan Island.<sup>6</sup>

But studies of the languages of New England Indian tribes indicate another origin for the word, that it derives from the Abnaki words *Nolumbeka* or *Aranmbegôk* [*sic*] which mean the stretch of quiet water between two falls or cascades. Those who claim this for the origin of the word agree that the Norumbega River and the Penobscot River are identical.<sup>7</sup>

These suggestions, diverse as they are, by no means exhaust all the proposals that have been advanced. Despite the complex metamorphoses which the word has undergone, however, it seems reasonably clear that the *Norumbegue* of Allefonsce, the *Nurumberg* and *Nurumbega* of Gastaldi, and the *Anorobagra* of Descelliers may be traced back to the *Nurumbega* of the anonymous chronicle of 1539 in Ramusio's *Raccolta* and beyond that to some common source, then accessible but now lost. But other and earlier roots suggest themselves: the *Oranbega* of H. de Verrazano's map of 1529; the *Arambec* of Hakluyt's description of the voyage of John Rut; the *Arambe* of a document of 1523 in Peter Martyr's *Decades*, describing a province on the east coast of North America known to the Spanish; the city of Bergi, which might have been transplanted from the east coast of Asia to the east coast of North America as a result of a widely-held geographical misconception. The latest and most careful student of the problem has concluded that an Indian origin of the word is highly dubious; in all probability its source is some European word, modified and elevated into a major geographical term through its substitution by some car-

<sup>6</sup> John Fiske, *New France and New England* (Boston, 1902), p. 27; Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-299.

<sup>7</sup> Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp. 84, 226; Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 184; Godfrey reports that in 1684 an aged Penobscot Indian stated that there had been an Indian village in his region years before called 'n'Aranbeck.' John E. Godfrey, 'Norumbega,' *Collections of the Maine Historical Society*, VIII (1881), 331-332.

tographer for the phrase 'Terra Francesca' which Verrazano applied to the regions he had discovered in honor of Francis I.<sup>8</sup>

In 1525, Estevan Gomez, who had participated in a mutiny against Ferdinand Magellan five years earlier, was sent out by the king of Spain to explore the east coast of North America. Gomez seems to have sailed south from Nova Scotia and the Bay of Fundy, coasted the shores of New England, and then proceeded to Cuba. The significance of his voyage, at least so far as its relation to the Norumbega legend is concerned, lies less in its actual accomplishments than in what those who followed him made of them.<sup>9</sup>

Four years later, Diego Ribero, a Spanish cartographer, produced a map of eastern North America which was based largely on the Gomez expedition. Clearly indicated on the map, southwest of Labrador and in latitude 50° N, is a broad expanse of land marked 'Tierra de Estevan Gomez'; and in longitude 63° W is a large triangular inlet, studded with islands, later called 'Rio de las Gamas.'<sup>10</sup> In practically all sixteenth-century maps of North America, the territory which Ribero called 'Tierra de Estevan Gomez' becomes 'Tierra de Norumbega,' and the broad, triangular inlet and river which Ribero drew—whether it is the Hudson, as some have said, or the Penobscot, as others have said—becomes the site of the great city of Norumbega, a site marked on later maps with

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<sup>8</sup> W. F. Ganong, 'The Origin of the Place-Names Acadia and Norumbega,' *Proceedings and Transactions*, Royal Society of Canada, 3rd series, XI (1917), ii, 109-111; W. F. Ganong, 'Crucial Maps in the Early Cartography and Place-nomenclature of the Atlantic Coast of Canada,' pt. IX, *Proceedings and Transactions*, Royal Society of Canada, 3rd series, XXXI (1937), ii, 119; Henry Harrisse, *Découverte et Evolution Cartographique de Terre-Neuve* (Paris, 1900), p. 548.

<sup>9</sup> J. G. Kohl, *History of the Discovery of Maine* (Portland, 1869), pp. 279, 301, 484-186

<sup>10</sup> Kohl, *op. cit.*, pp. 484-186. See also map on Plate 11.

crenellated castles to indicate the wealth and importance of the city.<sup>11</sup>

ii.

In the tenth book of *Paradise Lost*, John Milton describes the punishment inflicted on mankind by God because of Adam and Eve's having partaken of the forbidden fruit. An earth which had enjoyed no seasons but perpetual spring, in which polar snows had been forbidden to intrude was now to be tormented with pinching cold and scorching heat, for He had decreed that the sun should be diverted from its course. 'These changes in the heavens,' the poet tells us, 'though slow, produced like change on sea and land.'

Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,  
Corrupt and pestilent. Now from the north  
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice  
And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,  
Boreas and Caecias and Argestes loud  
And Thrascias rend the woods and seas upturn.<sup>12</sup>

But if Norumbega to Milton was a land of gloom and horror, the source of storms and tempests, it had not been that to his countrymen in the previous century. For them—and for Frenchmen and Spaniards and Portuguese—Norumbega was a fabulous land, whose capital city was more beautiful than London, a land of crystal and pearls, of gold and silver, whose treasures could be had if only they could be found.

How this legend started no one knows, but that it persisted for a hundred years to lure seamen to weigh anchor in Bristol, Havre, Dieppe, Rouen, and the ports of Spain and Portugal to venture across the North Atlantic cannot be doubted. Nor

<sup>11</sup> For the influence of the Ribero map on later cartographers, see Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. V, *Proceedings and Transactions*, Royal Society of Canada, XXVII (1933), ii, 195; pt. II, *ibid.*, XXIV (1930), ii, 180.

<sup>12</sup> John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book X, lines 694-700.

is it surprising that such a legend should have existed, for the early mariners who explored the coasts of North America, seeking gold and silver, were convinced that they were actually on the coasts of Asia. Their minds were filled with the glittering descriptions of Marco Polo and as they sailed the coast they were sure that somewhere in one of the river valleys, hidden from their eyes by impenetrable forests, lay a city of Cathay.<sup>13</sup> The maps of the period are evidence of the conviction of the seamen that in reality they were coasting the northeast promontory of Asia. The commission given by Francis I to the *Sieur de Roberval* stated that the lands of Canada 'form the extremity of Asia toward the west.'<sup>14</sup> It was a conviction that died hard, for as late as 1638, Jean Nicollet, an interpreter at Three Rivers on the St. Lawrence who had lived in Canada for twenty years, took with him a robe of Chinese damask, in case he should meet a party of mandarins, when he was sent as ambassador to an Indian tribe in the Great Lakes region.<sup>15</sup>

As early as the first decade of the sixteenth century, French and Basque fishermen were plying the waters of the Grand Bank. Some of them, doubtless, came ashore on the mainland, driven by storms or by curiosity, and began to ask the natives questions: Where were the spices; was there gold to be had; how far inland were the great cities of Cathay? In their eagerness to believe what they wanted to believe and out of their confused attempts to converse with the Indians, they probably transformed a statement that a sizable Indian village was located on the banks of a large river into the belief that somewhere nearby a fabulous city existed. It is not unreasonable to believe that an Indian village of exceptional importance was

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<sup>13</sup> Benjamin F. DeCosta, 'The Lost City of New England,' *The Magazine of American History*, I (1877), 16.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Fiske, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Parkman, *LaSalle and the Discovery of the Great West* (Boston, 1926), pp. 4-5

located along the banks of one of the New England rivers, a city that later vanished. Other such cities existed. On his first voyage to North America, for example, Cartier discovered the large Indian city of Hochelaga, a city that no other white man ever reported. But for his testimony, Hochelaga would be as mythical as Norumbega.

That is hypothesis. What is fact is that in 1539, Pierre Crignon reported the existence of the land of Norumbega and attributed its discovery to Verrazano. 'Following on beyond Cape Breton,' Crignon said,

is seen land contiguous to that cape, the coast of which travels south south-westward, to the land called Florida, and for 500 leagues, which was land discovered fifteen years ago by M. Giovanni da Verrazano in the name of the French king, and of Madame, the Regent. . . . The inhabitants of this country are docile people, friendly and good-tempered. The land is most abounding in every kind of fruit; there grow the orange and the almond, truly wholesome, and many various sorts of odoriferous trees. The country is called by its people Norumbega.<sup>16</sup>

In 1542, Jean Allefonsce, a French pilot, reported that he had coasted south from Newfoundland and had discovered a great river.

The river is more than 40 leagues wide at its entrance and retains its width some thirty or forty leagues. It is full of Islands, which stretch some ten or twelve leagues into the sea. . . . Fifteen leagues within this river there is a town called Norombega, with clever inhabitants, who trade in furs of all sorts; the town folks are dressed in furs, wearing sable. . . . The people use many words which sound like Latin. They worship the sun. They are tall and handsome in form. The land of Norombega lies high and is well situated.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Pierre Crignon, 'Discourse of a Great French Sea Captain of Dieppe,' quoted in Godfrey, *op. cit.*, p. 332; Kohl, *op. cit.*, p. 205; HARRISSE, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-158.

<sup>17</sup> MS. of Jean Allefonsce, quoted in Benjamin F. DeCosta, *Ancient Norombega* (Albany, 1890), p. 11; Winsor, *op. cit.*, IV, 69-70.



In the same year of Allefonsce's voyage, a map was prepared for Francis I of France which uses the word *Auorobagra* on the precise location where Ribero had shown his large triangular inlet and where most subsequent cartographers used the word *Norumbega*.<sup>18</sup>

It seems clear, therefore, that at least by 1539 French mariners believed in the existence of a land on the coast of North America, called Norumbega or Auorobagra, between Cape Breton in the north and Florida in the south. It was a belief which probably originated in the vague and misty reports of the fishermen and was thought to be confirmed by Verrazano's voyage.<sup>19</sup> When cartographers began to draw the coast between Newfoundland and Florida, what should have been more natural than to apply to it the name that was already at hand—Norumbega? Additional evidence that the Norumbega legend was created and given the appearance of reality by the French may be obtained from a study of the maps themselves.

Though the northeast coast of North America was first explored, mapped, and named by Portuguese and Spanish navigators, no mention of Norumbega appears on their maps. But the name does appear on French maps of the North American coast, even though they appear to be based largely on the Ribero map and retain most of the names first given to points along the coast by Portuguese and Spanish explorers. It is to be doubted that the French cartographers had actually seen the lands they drew on their maps; rather did they modify the Ribero map to take into account the reports of the existence

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<sup>18</sup> Kohl, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-353; 'Mappemonde peinte sur parchemin par ordre de Henri II, roi de France.' Jomard states that the map really dates from an earlier period: 'Cette carte . . . a été reconnu . . . plus ancienne que la règne de cette prince, et remonter à Francois I<sup>er</sup>; des indices certains constatent qu'elle a été exécutée en l'année 1542.' Edmé Francois Jomard, *Monuments de la Géographie* (Paris, 1862), Map XIX.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the influence of sailors' rumors and gossip on Allefonsce's description of Norumbega, see Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. V, *op. cit.*, XXVII (1933), ii, 157.

of a land and city of Norumbega that they had heard from fishermen, reports which seemed to be confirmed by the Verazano and Allefonsce voyages.<sup>20</sup> To them, the triangular inlet of Ribero was the Norumbega river of Allefonsce, and they marked their maps accordingly. In so doing, they established a tradition in cartography that persisted for a hundred years; for until the New England coast was thoroughly explored at the beginning of the seventeenth century, cartographers continued to show on the North American coast a large triangular inlet and river beside which the city of Norumbega was situated.

The maps of Descelliers, Mattioli, Gastaldi, Ruscelli, Velho, Mercator, Ortelius, and Wytfliet are all based on the French tradition of the existence of a land of Norumbega between New France and Florida, and most of them pinpointed the location of the city of Norumbega on the banks of the river first drawn by Ribero.<sup>21</sup> That this should be the case is not at all surprising, for although there were few expeditions to the New England coast between 1542, the date of Allefonsce's voyage, and 1600, maps of the region continued to be made. The result was that the cartographers copied from each other rather than from nature.<sup>22</sup> Whenever navigators touched upon land which seemed to resemble the island-studded river of Ribero, they

<sup>20</sup> HARRISSE, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150, 161.

<sup>21</sup> HARRISSE, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>22</sup> Concerning the progressive degeneration of the cartography of the east coast of North America before Champlain, Ganong states: 'With Gomez ended the official voyages of exploration to our region until the coming of Champlain in the next century. Meantime, however, there appeared, chiefly by French and Portuguese cartographers, many elaborate maps, which, though all resting ultimately in the Ribero, the Chaves-Santa Cruz, and the Gastaldi-Italian groups, illuminated only by sporadic scraps of new information, became through careless copying and translating from one another, warping by individual stylism, and aid of no little invention, progressively more diversified, complex, and corrupt through the century.' Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. IV, *op. cit.*, XXVI (1932), ii, 160. See also pt. I, XXIII (1929), ii, 140; pt. V, XXVII (1933), ii, 195.

assumed that they had reached the site of Norumbega, so strongly did they believe in the existence of the place. And their reports of having reached the river of the fabulous city tended to support the belief of the cartographers that such a land and city actually existed on the location they described. When, for example, Giacomo di Gastaldi's map was published in 1550, showing the location of Norumbega, the text accompanying it was the account written eleven years earlier by Pierre Crignon, attributing the discovery of Norumbega to Verrazano.<sup>23</sup>

In this process by which Norumbega was transformed from an elusive, indefinable locality to a precise location on a map, the critical point was apparently the publication of Mercator's chart, which added new topographical features to the region and changed the form of the word from the earlier *Auorobagra* to *Norumbega*. The form of the word and the existence of a large river and town Mercator seems to have derived from the description of Verrazano's discoveries in Ramusio and from Allefonsce's narrative. His innovation consists in having further developed the notion of the identity between Norumbega and the Penobscot region and in having developed a topography for the Rio de las Gamas area of Gomez that fitted in with all of the known facts concerning Norumbega. Thanks to Mercator, Norumbega was switched from the Narragansett Bay region actually visited by Verrazano to the Penobscot region skirted by Gomez. So persuasive was his influence that his geographical error persisted for a century and the efforts to find a Penobscot Indian origin for the elusive word, stemming from his application of the word to that region, have persisted to this day.<sup>24</sup>

In 1556 Andre Thevet sailed home to France after having

<sup>23</sup> Kohl, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-231.

<sup>24</sup> Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. VIII, *op. cit.*, XXX (1936), ii, 119-121; pt. IV, XXVI (1932), ii, 159.

accompanied the Villegagnon expedition to establish a Huguenot colony in Brazil. Thevet's account of his homeward voyage follows:

Having left La Florida on the left hand, with all its islands, gulfs, and capes, a river presents itself, which is one of the finest rivers in the whole world, which we call Norumbegue, and the aborigines Agoncy, and which is marked on some marine charts as the Grand River. Several other beautiful rivers enter into it; and upon its banks the French formerly erected a little fort about ten or twelve leagues from its mouth, which was surrounded by fresh-water, and this place was named the Fort of Norumbegue. Some pilots would make me believe that this country is the proper country of Canada. But I told them that this was far from the truth, since this country lies in  $43^{\circ}$  N., and that of Canada in  $50^{\circ}$  or  $52^{\circ}$ . Before you enter the said river appears an island surrounded by eight very small islets, which are near the country of the green mountains, and to the cape of the islets. From there you sail along into the mouth of the river, which is dangerous from the great number of thick and high rocks; and its entrance is wonderfully large. About three leagues into the river, an island presents itself to you, that may have four leagues in circumference, inhabited only by some fishermen and birds of different sorts.<sup>25</sup>

At least one curious fact stands out in Thevet's narrative. He is very specific in stating that the mouth of the Norumbega river contains fresh water, in complete contrast with Allefonsce who reported that the river was brackish as far as ninety miles inland from the coast. Acceptance of the Thevet account has led to the belief that the Norumbega river was really the Penobscot; acceptance of the Allefonsce account, that it was the Hudson. There is no real reason to believe, however, that either one was correct and the other of necessity wrong. Since Norumbega existed only on a map, on the banks of a river marked 'Rio Grande' or 'Rio de las Gamas' or even by another

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<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Kohl, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-231.

name, the critical question for determining its location was the identification of the river. To Allefonsce, the island-studded river of the map—the Norumbega river—was the Hudson River of reality; to Thevet, it was the Penobscot; and each proceeded to describe the Norumbega in terms of the Hudson or the Penobscot. Since there was no city of Norumbega on either river, there was no way of knowing which of the two rivers the Norumbega really was. Because the city of Norumbega was a non-existent city, located by cartographers on the banks of an enigmatic river, it could be located by mariners along any river which seemed to fit the description of the river on their charts.

But the fact remains that most mariners thought that the region of Norumbega was to the northeast of the Hudson, and they concentrated their attention on the New England coast.<sup>26</sup> They felt justified in doing so by continued reports of the existence of this rich city in the area they proposed to explore.

In October 1568 David Ingram was put ashore with a party of English seamen by John Hawkins on the Florida coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Hawkins had too many mouths to feed and too few provisions to feed them. What followed was an incredible saga of adventure. Ingram and two other sailors, in the short space of three months, walked through sub-tropic heat and fierce cold, across lands inhabited by savages, from the River of May in Florida north to the New England coast. There he boarded the French ship *Gargarise* and sailed for France.<sup>27</sup> Later, in the pubs of English seaport towns, he told shipmates of his experiences and of the wonders of the land he had seen.

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<sup>26</sup> For the crucial influence of Mercator in identifying Norumbega with the Penobscot region, see Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. IV, *op. cit.*, V (1932), ii, 130, 159, 167.

<sup>27</sup> Benjamin F. DeCosta, 'Norumbega and its English Explorers,' in Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 170.

That Ingram's adventures, incredible though they seem, were not entirely disbelieved is evident from the fact that in 1582 he was given a formal examination by English officials, an examination that was probably prompted by the fact that Sir Humphrey Gilbert was preparing to send out a new expedition to America.

Ingram's description was enough to whet the appetite of any seaman. 'He hath confessed,' his official examination stated,

that generallye all men weare about there armes dyvers hoopes of gold and silver w<sup>ch</sup> are of good thickness and lykwyse they weare the lyke about the smale of there leggs w<sup>ch</sup> hoopes are garnished w<sup>th</sup> pearle dyvers of them as bigge as ones thume. . . . the womenne of the cuntrye gooe apareled w<sup>th</sup> plats of gold over there bodye much lyke unto an armor about the middest of there bodye they weare leafes, w<sup>ch</sup> hath growinge there one very large much lyke unto heare, and lykewyse about there armes and the smale of there leggs they weare hoopes of gold and silver garnished w<sup>th</sup> fayer pearle.

'Pyllors of Cristall' there were, and other pillars that supported 'many things of gold and silver'; pearls abounded, and pieces of gold lay about, some 'as bigge as his finger, others as bigge as his fyst.' <sup>28</sup>

Ingram's tale was accepted, for at certain points his account corresponded with reports brought back by other seamen who had been to the New England coast. When Ingram stated that the inhabitants of this magnificent city lived in round houses, his interrogator carefully wrote in the margin of the transcript: 'S Humfrey Gylbert's man w<sup>ch</sup> he sent to discover y<sup>t</sup> land reporteth there howses to be built in lyke manner rounde.' And when Ingram reported the existence of a strange, hairy, ox-like creature with ears like those of a bloodhound, his examiner noted: 'Sr H. Gylbert's man brought of the syds of this beaste from the place he discovered.' <sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> DeCosta, *Ancient Norombega*, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The Ingram document is an indication, therefore, not only of a continuing interest in Norumbega, the land of uncounted wealth, but of the fact that at least one other expedition had been sent out for exploration sometime before 1582. Indeed, Ingram himself stated that

1579 Simon fferdinando Mr. Secretary Walsingham's man went and came from the same coast w<sup>th</sup> in three months in the little ffrigate without any other consort, and arrived at Dartmouth where he ymbarked when he beganne his viage.<sup>30</sup>

And attached to the Ingram examination is another document, a statement by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, indicating still another expedition to the northeast coast of North America in 1580. The Gilbert examination states that he had studied reports by Verrazano and Cartier concerning the lands about which Ingram had testified and had personally conferred with John Barros, Andrewe Thevett, and John Walker. In 1580, while in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's service, Walker had discovered 'a silver mine w<sup>th</sup> in the River of Norambega, on the north shore upon a hill. . . . The Country was most excellent both for the soyle, diuersity of sweete woode and other trees.' And he had come across a large number of hides, most of them 'eighteen foot by the square.' These Walker sold in France at forty shillings apiece.<sup>31</sup>

It seems perfectly clear that by this time the consensus of opinion among seamen was that Norumbega was located somewhere in New England, though that term was not yet used. Shortly before his voyage of 1583, in which he took possession of Newfoundland in the name of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Humphrey Gilbert approached Dr. John Dee 'to know the tytle of Norumbega in respect of Spayne and Portugall.'<sup>32</sup> Gilbert

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3; DeCosta, in Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 171.

<sup>31</sup> DeCosta, *Ancient Norumbega*, p. 7; DeCosta, in Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 171.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in DeCosta, *Ancient Norumbega*, p. 9.

had intended to explore the coast of Norumbega on that voyage and he had brought along with him the Hungarian poet Stephanus Parmenius Budeius to compose Latin poems in praise of Norumbega. But Parmenius went down with the wreck of *Admiral* and Gilbert himself was drowned when his ship was sunk on his return home.<sup>33</sup> It had been a voyage, the Mayor of Bristol told Walsingham, 'intended for the discovery of the coast of America lying to the south-west of Cape Briton.'<sup>34</sup>

By the latter part of the sixteenth century, Norumbega was well known enough to attract the attention of Richard Hakluyt. In 1582, in his *Divers Voyages*, and again in 1584, in his *Discourse on Western Planting*, Hakluyt claimed Norumbega in behalf of the English on the basis of Sebastian Cabot's voyages, noted that it could serve as a market for English wool, and recommended the planting of colonies in that region.<sup>35</sup> At least three voyages were undertaken. In 1593 Richard Strong sailed 'up and down the coast of Arembec to the west and southwest of Cape Breton.'<sup>36</sup> In 1602 Captain Bartholomew Gosnold coasted New England, failed in an attempt to plant a colony, and returned to England with a cargo of cedar and sassafras.<sup>37</sup> Less than a year after Gosnold's return, Hakluyt, excited by the cargo he had brought back, approached

<sup>33</sup> DeCosta, *ibid.*, p. 10; DeCosta, in Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 171.

<sup>34</sup> DeCosta, *Ancient Norumbega*, p. 9

<sup>35</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *Discourse on Western Planting*, Leonard Woods, ed. (Cambridge, 1877), LILIII, 153. In *Divers Voyages* (1582), Hakluyt speaks of *Morum Bega*. In his *Navigations* (1589-1590), he uses *Norumbega*, but this he changed in the 1600 edition to 'Aranbec, corruptly called Norumbega.' It has been suggested that this last change arose from the fact that between 1589 and 1600 Hakluyt published an English edition of Peter Martyr's *Decades*, which contained a Spanish document of 1523 giving *Arambe* as an Indian name of a province on the east coast of North America. Ganong, 'Crucial Maps,' pt. IX, *op. cit.*, XXXI (1937), ii, 123.

<sup>36</sup> DeCosta, in Winsor, *op. cit.*, III, 171-172.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.



a group of Bristol merchants and organized a second voyage under Martin Pring.<sup>38</sup>

In September 1604 Samuel de Champlain, with twelve sailors and two Indian guides, left the French settlement of St. Croix and skirted the northern coast of Maine as far as the Penobscot River. 'I think,' Champlain said, 'that this river is the one which several pilots and historians call Norumbegue. It has also been said that there is a large city, densely populated by savages who are clever and skilful in the use of cotton thread. I am certain that most of those who have mentioned them did not see them and speak from what they heard from those who knew no more than they did.'<sup>39</sup>

Thus, coldly, did Champlain begin the voyage which was to dissolve the mirage of Norumbega. He sailed twenty-five leagues up the Penobscot and saw no cities or villages. 'All the inhabitants of Norumbegue are quite swarthy, and dress in beaver skins and other furs, like the Canadian and Souriquois Savages, and live after the same manner. This in fact is all that I saw of the coast, people and river of Norumbegue, in which there is no such marvel as has been written of them.'

And then came the crushing blow—'I think this place is as disagreeable in winter as Sainte Croix.'<sup>40</sup>

He had found no great city, no pillars of pearl, no gold—only a weatherbeaten cross, old and mossy, in the woods. Perhaps, as John Greenleaf Whittier wrote 250 years later, the cross marked the grave of some French explorer who had sought the 'lordly tower and hall of Norumbega' only to hear 'the wolf howl and the loon laugh from his reedy pond.'

. . . when the Sieur Champlain  
Sailed up the unknown stream,  
And Norumbega proved again

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>39</sup> Translated from Harrisse, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in *The Magazine of American History*, I (1877), 324.

A shadow and a dream,  
 He found the Norman's nameless grave  
 Within the hemlock's shade  
 And, stretching wide its arms to save,  
 The sign that God had made,  
 The cross-boughed tree that marked the spot  
 And made it holy ground:  
 He needs the earthly city not  
 Who hath the heavenly found.<sup>41</sup>

Curiously, it was the French, to whom the Norumbega legend owed so much, who finally shattered the myth for which they were so largely responsible. In 1612 Marc Lescarbot, the historian of New France, wrote coldly:

If that beautiful city has ever existed in nature, I should like to hear who destroyed it; for there are only a few cabins here and there, made of poles and covered with branches of trees or with skins.<sup>42</sup>

For Jean Allefonsce, who claimed to have seen the land of Norumbega in 1542, Lescarbot reserved his sharpest barbs:

<sup>41</sup> *The Complete Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier* (Boston, 1895), p. 93. In April, 1886, when Norumbega Hall at Wellesley College, named in honor of Eben Norton Horsford, was opened, Whittier wrote another poem on Norumbega and advanced a new theory for its site:

Not on Penobscot's wooded bank the spires  
 Of the sought City rose, nor yet beside  
 The winding Charles, nor where the daily tide  
 Of Naumkeag's haven rises and retires,  
 The vision tarried; but somewhere we knew  
 The beautiful gate must open to our quest,  
 Somewhere that marvelous City of the West  
 Would lift its towers and palace domes in view,  
 And, lo! at last its mystery is made known—  
 Its only dwellers maidens fair and young,  
 Its Princess such as England's Laureate sung;  
 And safe from capture, save by love alone,  
 It lends its beauty to the lake's green shore,  
 And Norumbega is a myth no more.

*Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

<sup>42</sup> Translated from Harrisse, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

I see no truth, or very little of it, in anything that man said. Well might he call his voyage adventuresome, not for him—who never saw the hundredth part of the places he described—but for those who would like to follow the routes he laid out for mariners to follow.<sup>43</sup>

That same year, Father Pierre Biard sent a letter from Port-Royal to Jesuit General Claude Aquaviva in Paris, describing the country:

I saw with M. de Beaucourt a great part of the country, all that which the ancients called Norumbega. . . . Pentegoet is a very fine river and can be likened to the French Garonne. It empties into the French Gulf and has several islands and rocks at the mouth. . . . Its mouth is about three leagues broad, at 44 and a half degrees from the equator. You cannot divine what is the Norumbega of the ancients if it is not this; for otherwise both the others and myself inquiring after this land and place have never been able to learn anything.<sup>44</sup>

Though the term Norumbega, applied to a portion of New England, continued to appear at least until 1652,<sup>45</sup> the discoveries of the French and the publication in 1614 of Captain John Smith's map of New England effectively destroyed the myth of the city of castles and pleasure domes. It was a myth whose existence had corresponded to that period when exploration was undertaken to discover gold and spices and new routes to the Orient; and it lasted until the new age of colonization began. As late as 1619, Mercator's *Atlas* was still using 'Norumbega' to describe the land discovered by Estevan Gomez,<sup>46</sup> but it could not be used for long. The Pilgrims had been corre-

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>44</sup> 'Extracts from the Letters of the Jesuit Missionary in Maine, Father P. Biard,' *Collections and Proceedings of the Maine Historical Society*, 2nd series, II (1891), 426.

<sup>45</sup> Godfrey, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>46</sup> Kohl, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

sponding with Sir Edwin Sandys since 1617, and the next year they were to embark upon a voyage, not to seek a glittering city, but to "seeke of Him a right way for us, and for our children, and for all our substance."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ezra, 8:21, quoted in William Bradford, *Of Plimouth Plantation* (Boston, 1928), p. 72.

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### 3. THE SEMITECHNICAL ESSAY

## Flying Blind

WOLFGANG LANGEWIESCHE

THE BIRDS, who ought to know all about flying, cannot fly blind; but men can. The proudest skill of airmanship, painfully learned only yesterday, blind flying does not mean, of course, flying with eyes closed or bandaged. It means flying in clouds or fog when you can see nothing but vapor—no horizon, no ground, no stars. Rather than to attempt flight where he can't see, a bird will invariably ground himself—for a reason which he must feel quite clearly within himself: his sense perceptions are not good enough for such a task. Neither are a man's. But the modern professional pilot has learned to fly by the artificial sense organs on the instrument panel before him.

So normal has it become to be "on instruments" in the whitish nothing, divorced with unbelievable completeness from all the world, that flying people have felt the need of a word for the *other* condition—the condition under which man has always operated so universally that it had never needed a name. When you can see any trace of the ground, even only a single light, glimpsed through a hole in the cloud, that's "contact"—because you are visually in touch with the world. A pilot will say: "I was contact as far as Pittsburgh, and then went on instruments."

It is flight on instruments through thick weather, rather

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than the increased size and speed of airplanes, that has allowed aviation to quit fooling and get down to business. In fact, the modern, fast, heavy airplane itself would be quite useless if it had to be flown by the piloting techniques of the twenties. In those days, pilots tackled bad weather in the same way in which the sportsman pilot still tackles it today: contact at any price. As the ceiling came down, you came down. The sportsman can stop when the going gets too low. But the professionals of those days, trying to make a go of the flying business, would keep pushing: try and sneak through underneath, hedge-hopping; get down on the tree tops, follow the railroad tracks, fly down one valley and up another; and finally, caught between lowering ceiling and rising terrain, crash-land in a cow pasture. Those were the heroic days of the old airmail, when bonfires marked the hills along the mail routes, and you could tell a pilot by his scarred and squashed-in nose.

It was mortally dangerous even then, but the mail bags didn't mind. Passengers were rarely carried. With today's faster, heavier airplanes it would be suicidal. You can't bend a fast airplane around the turns of a narrow river in the Alleghenies; and even on the plains of Kansas, if you tried to stay contact in bad weather, an oil well derrick would snag you before you could see it, or at any rate, before you could avoid it. The big, fast airplane must seek safety in the upper air just as the big, fast steamer must seek it on the high seas—or in a big port. If there is bad weather all around you, you can't land on a cow pasture, nor even on a Cub field. You need a mile of paved runway. Thus, when the white vapors suddenly slap a curtain on your windshield, you must be able to pull in your horns as it were, quit looking out, climb, and go on *through*.

They knew all that well enough even in the old days. Whenever the weather changed, the itching scars on a pilot's nose would remind him that flying under the weather got you hurt. Whenever he was broke he would have it brought home to him that flying by grace of the weather could not be a business.

So the old airmail pilots, the early Air Corps men, tried often enough to fly blind.

But it was a baffling thing: a man would climb up into the overcast—and a minute later he would fall back out of the clouds in a crazy snarling dive. And all who tried it had much the same story to tell: first the compass would go crazy and start spinning; then the airplane would go crazy and start diving, all its wires screaming, and the harder you pulled on the stick, the faster and more vicious became the dive. Finally the ground would burst into view—usually in some crazy place, such as above your left shoulder, because you were in a crazy attitude, half upside-down. But the moment the ground was visible, the airplane was obedient again and you recovered.

No tricks of piloting technique seemed to help. One pilot would try to hold hands and feet rigid, all controls in neutral—reasoning that since an airplane practically flies itself outside of the clouds, it ought to do the same inside. But he would dive out. Another would try to do super-piloting, reacting with utmost alacrity to even the slightest bit of “feel.” He would dive out just the same. As long as it was tried for practice on a single isolated cloud it was merely a puzzling game; you fell out into the clear before the spiral dive, with its combination of terrific speed and centrifugal force, became vicious enough to tear off your wings. But sometimes a pilot flying cross-country would get caught between two cloud layers which merged together around him. Then he would struggle and stagger for a few minutes, aided perhaps by an occasional glimpse of a pale sun. But eventually witnesses would hear a snarl from within the cloud and a loud crash; pieces of airplane would rain out of the clouds, and finally a parachute; or sometimes *no chute*.

It was a baffling thing; steamships plow blind through fog, steering by compass. A blindfolded man may walk around in circles, but he can walk; he doesn't stagger and fall simply because he can't see. What was there inside a cloud that jerked

the rug out from under you? Someone thought of putting a canvas hood over the cockpit, cutting off all outside vision—an artificial and personal cloud for the pilot. Another pilot, in the ship's other cockpit, would watch and keep him safe. Now it was possible to observe the process that had always been hidden from human eyes. It turned out that the dive was not a simple nosing down, but a complicated maneuver growing out of a *turn*. The moment the blind pilot took over, the airplane would begin to bank and turn. Then, as it circled, the bank would steepen and the turn become tighter. At the same time, the airplane would lower its nose and pick up speed, so that the circling became a downward spiral. Presently, as the bank kept steepening and the nose kept going down, the spiral would become a steep, vicious corkscrew, and the safety pilot would have to take over.

This spiral character of the cloud dive represented to airmen a peculiar mixture of the familiar and the puzzling. It was familiar as the behavior of an airplane in uncontrolled flight. Every airplane—even a boy's model airplane—will circle rather than fly straight, unless the pilot keeps it straight by continual gentle nudges on the controls. Once circling, every airplane wants to increase its bank and tighten the circle, and at the same time drop its nose and pick up speed—unless the pilot holds his controls against this overbanking tendency and this nose-heaviness. But the puzzle was: why was the blindly-flown airplane uncontrolled: Could it be that the pilot did not realize he was banked and turning?

Assuming this was it, airmen could see also why the spiral finally got so very tight and vicious. For though the pilot might fail to sense bank and turning, he could certainly sense the speed increase—he could hear it in the screaming of the wires, and could feel it in the stiffness of the controls. So he would pull back on the stick to raise his nose. But in his steep bank what seemed like “up” to him was actually no longer “up”: his pull merely forced the nose more tightly into the turn. The



tighter turn then would produce still more overbanking, still further lowering of the nose, and thus still more speed; and the pilot would then pull still harder. It was quite literally a vicious circle.

The same assumption also explained why airplanes so mysteriously returned to their senses the instant they fell out into the clear: it was really the pilot who returned to his senses. The moment he discovered himself steeply banked-up and turning, he leveled his wings and stopped the turning by purely automatic reflex, without even realizing that he did. The corkscrew dive thus became a straight dive, and out of a *straight* dive a good airplane recovers all by itself. But this explanation only pushed the puzzle farther back: Granted that the pilot could not *see* his crazy bank, his dizzy turning—why couldn't he *feel* it?

ii.

From the discussions of those days, an odd item of air lore is still widely quoted: that the pilot in the clouds loses his sense of balance completely and can no longer tell whether he is right-side-up, upside-down or on his side. This is not true. The pilot's sense of balance works. Why should it quit simply because he cannot see? Close your eyes, and you will have no trouble balancing on one foot. No, the trouble is much less mysterious—and much harder to fix. The pilot's sense of balance works; but as the airplane peels off into its spiral dive, its motions are such that the sense of balance remains satisfied, regardless of how steep the bank becomes, how sharp the turn. Even when the airplane finally banks past vertical, it is still in balance.

For that is the nature of the banked turn: by definition and by purpose, it is a balanced maneuver. If the airplane flew its turns without banking (the way an automobile goes around a corner) then the pilot would feel the turn as a sidewise pull, just as you feel it in a car. If the airplane flew with one wing

low without turning (comparable to an automobile being driven along the sloping shoulder of a road) then the pilot would feel the slant of his seat. But the airplane does not fly that way. It is built so, with cleverly tilted wings, cleverly proportioned tail-fins, clever balance of weight, etc., that it always banks as it turns, always turns as it banks. And the combination of bank and turn is mutually canceling: however extreme the maneuver, the bank kills the feel of the turn, the turn kills the feel of the bank; the pilot's sense of balance remains undisturbed.

When you ride the airlines, you may sometimes have a sensation which seems to contradict this. As the liner banks, you feel an urge to keep yourself perpendicular to the earth, and thus you lean over to the high side: it seems, then, that your sense of balance is disturbed after all. But actually it is your eye that is disturbed. It sees you sitting slantwise to the universe, and being a ground-animal's eye, accustomed to see the ground squarely under you and the sky squarely above, it protests. Close your eyes, and you will feel no bank, no turn. True, if the banked turn is at all steep—it rarely is on the air-lines—it has “feel” in that you become heavy in the head, heavy in your seat. So does the blind-flying pilot feel heavy as his airplane spirals, and he may suspect that he is turning: but he has no way of feeling which way he is turning.

Not even a bird can tell. In a classic experiment, an Army pioneer of blind flight, Lt. Crane, threw a blindfolded carrier pigeon out of an airplane. The pigeon went through a series of erratic maneuvers, fell off into a spiral dive and gave up: it simply let itself fall, holding its wings up at a high angle to brake its descent. It was a bird's equivalent to bailing out! That proved it: if a bird couldn't do it, blind flying by the natural senses was impossible.

iii.

Could some instrument detect a thing to which the natural senses were numb? Here was a novel engineering problem.

The airplane's instrument board was even then well studded with all sorts of gauges by which the pilot could know more accurately his speed and altitude, power, direction of flight, skid, climb or descent; for his ground-animal sensing of most flight facts is much too vague for his flight needs. But he does sense them, and the existing instruments were essentially nothing but mechanizations of natural sensing. An airplane's speed indicator, for example, is much like the hand which you might hold into the water from a rowboat to *feel*, by the water's push against it, how fast you are going. The climb indicator is nothing but a mechanized replica of the air chambers which make your ear click when the airplane climbs, and make it sometimes hurt when it descends. But there was no prototype in nature for an instrument to sense bank and turn.

While engineers puzzled, pilots experimented on their own. This was before men wore wrist watches, and many a pilot, caught between cloud layers, tried to fly "on instruments" by hanging his watch and chain on the instrument board. This pendulum, he reasoned, would always point straight down at the ground. If the airplane banked, the pendulum would show it by hanging obliquely across the board. But of course it didn't work. A pendulum is affected by the banked turn precisely as the pilot is affected. It hangs straight down toward the cockpit floor just as the pilot sits straight up in his seat—no matter how steep the bank. On the top of a loop, a pendulum would still point at the cockpit floor—straight up!

Neither would a carpenter's level do the job. Naturally not: the sense of balance is itself something of a carpenter's level; it resides, crudely speaking, in certain liquid-filled chambers of the inner ear. And the same reasons which keep the sense of balance satisfied in a banked turn keep a carpenter's level indicating that the wings are level, no matter how steep the bank.

But the compass? If you could keep the airplane from turning by following an accurate compass course, then it could never get started on a spiral dive. The compass needle points

north. North certainly stays in its place no matter what the airplane does. But even the compass is nullified by the banked turn—for a surprising reason. The north pole is not on the northern horizon, but (as seen from the U. S.) deeply *below* the horizon (much as the direct route to China would be a tunnel dug steeply down through the earth). As the bank tilts the compass up sidewise, this downward pull of the pole has the effect of turning the compass. And as the banked airplane flies around a circle, these disturbances come in a sequence which sometimes swings the needle clear around and sets it spinning! Thus the compass indicates correctly only when read in steady straight flight; instead of helping the pilot to fly straight, the pilot must help it by flying straight.

The answer was finally found in a branch of mechanics which used to be of interest mostly to children: gyroscopics, or the peculiar behavior of a spinning body. A top ought not to stand on its point; yet, as long as it spins rapidly enough, it does. A coin ought to fall over and lie flat. Yet, as long as it rolls, it stays on edge, and it will roll around a curve rather than let itself fall. Thus a spinning body seems to obey mechanical laws of its own, and seems to be exempt from others.

As pure physics, all this was well understood in Newton's day. As useful mechanics, it was re-discovered by Elmer Ambrose Sperry, an American. The giant Sperry Gyroscope Company is the up-shoot of his patents. Here was a way to do all sorts of abstruse tricks that needed doing: make ships steer themselves automatically, build compasses that do not depend on the earth's magnetism, aim guns from moving platforms at moving targets with mathematical precision, keep steamers from rolling in a seaway. Here, finally, was a way to sense the banked turn of an airplane.

The turn indicator is an instrument, no bigger than the other instruments on an airplane's panel, which contains an elaborate little power plant. A tiny turbine is spun by jets of air at ten times the speed of an airplane propeller. This tur-

bine is mounted in a movable frame which is held in position by springs and is connected by a linkage with a needle on the instrument's face. Leading its strange, semi-independent existence in space, the whirling little mass does not follow along willingly as the airplane turns. It rears up in its frame, and thus makes the needle lean to the side toward which the airplane is turning. The needle thus shows the pilot: "You are now turning slowly to the right." "You are now turning sharply to the left." "You are now flying straight." Blind flying was now possible.

iv.

That was the internal logic, at least, of blind flying history. The chronological sequence is quite confused—significantly confused. Sperry had brought out the turn indicator during the first World War. Ever since then, therefore, many pilots had had the solution of the blind flying problem literally staring them in the face! But so little understood was the crux of blind flying—how an airplane *wants* to bank and turn into a spiral, and how the banked turn is by its very nature feel-less—that pilots would actually damn the instrument for its very truthfulness: it worked all right, some reported, as long as you could see. But every time you flew into a cloud, the thing went crazy and showed a turn!

Besides, the instrument would have been useless anyway, even had all pilots intellectually understood its function, because to fly by its guidance requires a strange, somewhat unnatural neuro-muscular skill which had yet to be invented. It was not until the middle twenties that word first got around that some pilots actually had found the knack of flying blind—at least for stretches of twenty minutes or so. If by that time you didn't see the ground or reach the cloud-tops, you were sure sooner or later to spill. And once she got away from you and started to spiral, you were a goner. To *recover* on instruments was beyond human skill.

One of those who caught on early was Lindbergh. When still an unknown airmail pilot, he heard of a colleague on the transcontinental mail who owned one of the mysterious gyros, and wanted to sell. Lindbergh bought it. His experience with it, however, illustrates another reason why blind flying was so slow to come. There were no radio beams in those days by which a blind-flying pilot could keep track of his position—largely because there was no need for such beams until blind flying should prove itself practical! Once you lost sight of the ground in bad weather, therefore, you dared not descend again, for fear of flying into a hill or a skyscraper. Thus blind flying had practical value mostly as a desperate emergency measure to save your neck. Lindbergh used his turn indicator exactly twice—each time when caught in impossible weather—and each time all he could do with it was to climb to a safe altitude and jump! But on those two flights he did learn the secret: you must absolutely trust your turn-gyro, and disregard your own senses. Lindbergh's Atlantic crossing a little later was a startling demonstration of blind flying: for he flew through fog and clouds by the hour, and though he started twice to spiral-dive, he did recover.

Then there was Howard Stark, a former barnstormer who flew the night mail through tropical thunderstorms between Buenos Aires and Porto Alegre, and flew for the early passenger lines on the foggy New York-Boston route, and flew on the New York-Cleveland line, across the "Hellstretch" where the stuff often lies right on the Alleghenies, even though New York and Ohio may be clear. Stark taught himself how to fly blind, and he went on from there.

He investigated introspectively just how he did it. He named and described the hallucinations which bothered him, the tricks his senses played on him, the nerve cramps, as it were, by which a blind-flier was likely to spiral to his death. For example, he found out just what it was that made recovery from a spiral dive so nearly impossible even for those who

did know how to fly straight and level. He called it "turn-tightening": if the pilot was just a little over-anxious to reduce his speed, and just the least bit too dimly aware of the steepness of his bank, he would behave much as the instrument-less pilot behaves in clouds—pull his nose more tightly into the turn and cancel his own efforts to right the airplane. Stark discovered that the secret lay in the time sequence in which the pilot was to read his instruments and work his controls. Of all the possible ways in which a pilot's eye could chase the instruments, in which his hands and feet could wiggle the controls, he discovered the one way which would work under all possible conditions—straight flight, turning flight, recoveries from dives, from stalls or spins or any crazy attitude you might get yourself into. First, you read your turn indicator and straightened the flight. Only then you read the airspeed indicator. (If she was flying too fast, it was a sign that she was diving; if she was flying too slowly, it was a sign that she was climbing; and now, with the wings level you could raise or lower her nose as necessary with your stick.) Then, thirdly, you checked your climb indicator. (If now that she was flying at reasonable speed she still showed an undesired descent or climb, you gave her a little more or less throttle.) Then you went back to your turn indicator again; and so you went, 1-2-3, 1-2-3, mechanically and stoically until the clouds finally faded out and you broke into the clear.

And Stark went on from there. He set out to change blind flying from a mysterious personal knack into a teachable and learnable procedure. He seems not to have been a highly-educated man, and there was no book learning in the ideas which he scraped up from within himself in the clouds. But he recognized an idea when he saw one, and did not let it be ineffectual for lack of devotion. He wrote a book, though he had to print and distribute it himself and even peddle it about the airports where he stopped over on his flights. He rode as co-pilot with the captains of Eastern Airlines to teach them his

system; then did the same with Royal Dutch Airlines. The U. S. Department of Commerce put him in charge of blind flying procedures on the airlines, in the days when so many airliners used to crash into Western mountain tops. While looking into those troubles, he was flying a small airplane alone blind through snowstorms across the mountains of Utah, and did not report again. Days later his airplane was found, nearly intact, on a high-up snow field. He must have seen the mountain at the last moment and managed to set her down. There was no trace of him, and the airplane's compass was gone. Evidently he had set out to walk, still trusting instruments. Many years later a shepherd found his bones.

## v.

Today, you can buy blind flying instruction commercially—at twenty dollars an hour and up—assuming you already know how to fly contact. You do your learning not in the real stuff, but “under the hood.” The old hood, however, has become sophisticated: sheets of an amber transparent plastic are fitted on windshield and cabin windows. Through them, the instructor can see the outside world clearly, if rosily, and can guard you against collision on the crowded airways. You wear green goggles. These allow you to see the instruments clearly; but combined with the amber windshield, they make the outside world a solid black. And that's what it takes to put you “on instruments”: if you caught even the faintest glimpse of the ground, of the sun, of a distant cloud, even perhaps only out of the corner of your eye, you would be contact: your mind would snap back instantly to effortless natural orientation of self in space.

It takes more hours to learn how to fly on instruments than it takes to learn how to fly in the first place. When it comes to making hands and feet respond to instrument indications rather than to the real senses, that same old catch comes up again: that you can't feel the banked turn. You *can* feel every-



thing else about the airplane's motion, even while blind: slip or skid, climb or descent, slowing down or speeding up, upswing or downswing of the nose: all those go through a skilled pilot's body like electric shocks, and even a passenger gets to feel them. This feel makes the speed indicator, the climb indicator, the skid indicator easy to read, easy to believe: whenever they have anything new to report, you always get some simultaneous evidence through the senses. But when the turn-gyro shows that you are peeling off into a steeper and steeper bank, there is no simultaneous warning feel: the indication is completely "cold," quiet, intellectual. And intellect is no man's strong point while in flight.

This feel-less character of the turn *indication* has much the same effect on the instrument pilot as the feel-less character of the turn itself had on the old-timer with his bare panel. At first, you simply keep forgetting, let your attention freeze on the other instruments, the feel-emphasized ones, and spiral off just as if you had no turn indicator. Especially so when the going gets lively and the sense perceptions become correspondingly vivid. That's why it is so difficult, once you let yourself get into a spiral, to recover again instead of "turn-tightening" yourself into a corkscrew.

Fortunately, this trouble does not always become quite so catastrophic. More often it means merely an annoying habit of the airplane to turn around, like a tired horse that wants to go home. You are flying west. Your ear catches a beat in the noise of your engines; and now your eye is engaged for a while on the engine instruments as you fiddle with controls to synchronize your engines. You look up again, find a little bank and level your wings. And only a minute later you realize that you are now flying east: you turned while you were not looking.

Once I was flying with a hooded student some thirty miles east of the airport, and his time was up. "Let's go home," I said. "Take a west heading." He did. Then I began to badger

him: "Synchronize your propellers." "Descend at 500 feet per minute, airspeed 120 miles per hour." "Run your engines at 2000 RPM"—and so forth: he did so much involuntary circling that in the next twenty minutes he got only ten miles closer to the airport! Once I was safety pilot on a cross-country flight "under the hood." The pilot did all right until it came time to get out the map and look up a distance. He made the mistake of staring at the map while doing some mental calculation. In that short interval, his airplane banked, turned, dropped its nose and started circling. It so happened that he looked at the board again just as the circle was about complete. He duly saw the bank and levelled his wings, duly saw the increased airspeed and pulled the nose up, and then resumed his compass course. After a while he even woke up to the fact that he was almost a thousand feet below his proper altitude, and climbed back up. But to this day he won't believe that he ever circled! And that kind of thing happens not only to students. Only a few months ago an airliner flew into the ground at night, killing most aboard. The pilot, who survived, admits that he simply glanced away from his instrument board for a few moments while flying blind at low altitude. Naturally, the airplane banked and started on a spiral. And at high flying speeds a thousand feet of altitude are soon used up.

To learn to fly blind, therefore, means largely to condition yourself until that quiet feel-less instrument becomes a more powerful stimulus to you than even the fiercest noises and feels of flight: until you react to it as unfailingly as if it were a nerve in your own body. And that is a long, patient job which never gets quite finished.

Instrument makers have helped a lot by making turn indication more vivid. They have achieved this by arrangements of gyroscopes which are much more complex and clever than the old turn indicator—and much more expensive. Sperry's artificial horizon, for example, shows on its face a schematic picture of earth, sky and horizon-line as the flier sees it in clear

weather. It also shows, flying in this tiny sky-scene, a tiny airplane, seen from behind. This airplane means you. It banks and unbanks, moves up and down in instantaneous mimicry of your own maneuvers: a case of seeing yourself as others see you.

But even with the most vivid instruments, with your reflexes most highly conditioned, blind flying is still not natural; and you find that out when you finally get out from under the hood and trust yourself in the real stuff. You sit there in your ranting, vibrating little cabin, with nothing outside but the shapeless gray. To the animal in you this cabin now becomes the world: up is where the roof is, down is where the floor is. You forget even that this microcosm moves several miles a minute. The roar becomes a form of silence, and the speed is nothing but a needle quivering at a certain figure on a dial, and the clock's second-hand working away. Thus the animal in you feels quite secure in this comfortable little world.

But now, all of a sudden, your instruments show that you are in a right bank. Your training demands that you now use the controls energetically to pick up the right wing and depress the left. But the animal sees no reason to correct a condition for which there is no solid natural evidence. It thinks you are level; and it fears that your control-action will now spill you over into a left spiral.

This punishment of the animal is particularly severe in the livelier maneuvers, and becomes almost barbarous in the recovery from a spiral dive. You have been whirling down to your right. Now, as you abruptly straighten out, the fluid in your inner ear keeps whirling with the motion imparted to it during the turning. This produces the sensation that you are now in a violent spiral to the left, and an overpowering reflex action makes you fight this imaginary left spiral by using stick and rudder forcefully to the right. It is, of course, just plain common dizziness, such as children love to induce by whirling. But many a pilot has recovered from a spiral dive for an in-

stant only to throw himself right back into the same spiral voluntarily! Not to do so sometimes takes a clenched-teeth effort of will.

Deep down within you something resents this sort of thing, and in the long run answers with some of the strange nerve troubles which Howard Stark described. You get "the leans." As you cruise along, turn indicator centered, everything in order—your sense of balance, so long unemployed, disregarded and mistreated, now raises mischief with surprising insistence. It whispers that you are on your side—when you know you are not. And gradually you get split in two. Your eyes, your intellect, your hands and feet follow the instruments and fly the airplane straight and level. The rest of you slowly gives in to the crazed sense of balance, and after five minutes you begin to lean over sidewise in your seat, trying to keep yourself perpendicular in an imagined frame of reference. After ten minutes, you lean more. After twenty minutes you look as if you were bending over to pick something off the floor, and your head is nearly horizontal. And still your training keeps you flying straight. You don't realize that you are leaning. You realize only that you are under heavy strain, and you feel that you are flying the airplane on its side simply because the instruments tell you to do so—it can't be right. The longer this hallucination lasts, the more vivid it becomes. Unless you can break it, you are bound finally to give in, level your wings in imagined space, and thus in real space to spiral off.

These things are by no means precisely understood. Many reasons have been ascribed to them: it might be hypnosis caused by staring too closely at your turn needle too long. It might be the fact that sometimes the cloudstuff is lighter on your left than on your right, and the ground animal thinks that the light side means up and the dark side means down. It might be the fact that while you cannot feel the turn, you *can* feel sometimes an abrupt dipping motion of a wing, and

then again can *not* feel the slow recovery by which the wing comes up again. It does not matter, because finally you conquer this too. You conquer it with your imagination. Your mind goes beyond the mechanistic reading-off of instruments, the stoic moving of controls according to formula, and reaches beyond the gray curtains. Then with your mind's eye, you begin to see the earth, the horizon and the sky, and your own airplane cavorting in it. You are no longer blind. Then you are ready to fly when the birds are walking.

## COMMENT

The technological culture which has made us dependent upon the exchange of facts has become so complex that most of us are compelled to specialize in our studies and professions, devoting the greater part of our interest and energy to rather limited fields. This does not mean, however, that we lose all interest in other fields. Professors of archeology follow new developments in nuclear physics, insurance salesmen read up on aviation, aeronautical engineers wonder how music critics work. But few of us have the time, patience, and curiosity to struggle through the abstract technical articles written for specialists in fields other than our own. Hence there has come into being the semitechnical essay, which offers the general reader some of the more important facts and explanations about a special topic in easily understood terms and in ways which frankly appeal to the reader's interest by stirring his feelings and by relating the topic to his own experience. Many ideas of importance to the specialist must be left out of these essays, and some ideas which would be irrelevant in a truly technical article are included. The tone is no longer impersonal and neutral. Value judgments, though still subordinate to the facts and explanations, are strongly implied by the connotative phrases and the comparisons which relate the unfamiliar to daily life and perhaps show its significance or usefulness in that life. The quantitative facts which characterize the truly technical article and are there stated with such unusual pre-

cision, economy, and abstract detachment from the richly qualitative realm of actual experience are sacrificed, but we do not miss them, for we do not go to the semitechnical essay seeking formulas and measurements to be used in professional work. What has been lost to us in the way of highly technical but closely limited information is made up for by the interest and value of the more inclusive study of the subject in relation to our own familiar world.

"Flying Blind" is a good example of the semitechnical essay. Its purpose is not to teach us how to fly by instruments but only to tell us in an entertaining way how it is done by those who have learned. A secondary purpose, which contributes to the success of the first, is to give us some of the history of the development of instrument flying, partly because it helps us to understand the process and partly because it is of such compelling interest. A final purpose which seems to be lurking behind the others is to pay tribute to and arouse our admiration and respect for such courageous men as Charles Lindbergh and Howard Stark, who made blind flying possible by their daring experiments.

The ideas have been trimmed down to those which can be understood by a general reader who may never have flown or even looked into a plane. They have been arranged in a simple, easily understood order consisting of (a) a statement of the problems of blind flying, (b) an analysis of the problems which explains their nature, (c) a history of the efforts to solve the problems and a history of the development of equipment, (d) a description of the equipment, and (e) an explanation of the use of the equipment. Each new fact or explanation given in one section is directly and immediately useful for our understanding of the facts and explanations in the sections that follow. Many of the paragraphs are based upon inductive reasoning and contain a generalization together with a series of facts from which we can infer the validity of the generalization—as in the paragraph beginning "No tricks of piloting technique seemed to help," on page 53 and that beginning "It takes more hours to learn to fly on instruments than it takes to learn to fly in the first place," on page 62. Scattered throughout these explanations are cleverly chosen comparisons of blind flying with everyday experiences such as walking through fog, balancing on one foot,

trailing a hand in the water while rowing. Such comparisons not only help us to understand but also give us some of the actual feeling of flight and suggest some of the pilot's attitudes toward his experiences, thereby adding to the interest of the essay.

Anyone who has spent much time around airfields knows that pilots, particularly the old-timers with whom this essay is much concerned, are an easygoing, friendly, informal, and slangy group of men with an unabashed enthusiasm for flying and a sardonic manner toward all the frustrations and ironies wrought by pride, stubbornness, and bad weather. The tone of this essay is essentially the tone of their conversation, a good one for an essay that tries to give us some sense of participating in their life. It is made possible by the point of view and the level of usage. Langewiesche writes as a participant and addresses the reader directly as "you" in a way that gives immediacy to the account. He uses informal language full of slang and hangar talk. Thus, airlines "quit fooling and get down to business." Pilots "try and sneak through" the overcast and remember times when their planes "went crazy" and fell into a "crazy snarling dive."

Some of the images are unusually vivid. The metaphor "You can't bend a fast airplane around the turns of a narrow river in the Alleghenies" powerfully suggests how desperate might be the struggle to keep a plane in the air. The personification contained in the figure of the oil derrick on the plains of Kansas that "would snag you before you could see it" suggests in a way quite impossible to the more literal "you would hit an oil derrick" the pilot's sense of hostile forces that seem to reach up to pull his plane out of the air. Too unlimited in meaning and too far from the quantitative to suit a thoroughgoing technical report, these images excellently serve the purpose of this essay.

The lighthearted tone and the slang should not lead us into underestimating the essay's worth. Too often we make the mistake of thinking that only writing with a solemn tone can say anything of importance. It is true that the breeziness of this piece hardly allows for much profundity, but some useful information has been furnished us, and we turn away with a better understanding of one aspect of our technological age.

# The Art of Judging Music

VIRGIL THOMSON

THE LAYMAN is under no obligation to exercise judgment with regard to musical works, to describe to himself their characteristics or to estimate their value for history. He can take them to his heart or let them alone. He does not have to be just or fair or to reflect about them in any way. He can accept, reject, or tolerate, using only caprice as his guide. The professional has no such liberty. Neither has any music patron or amateur who has chosen to follow as a music consumer the standards that govern the music producer.

These standards are not immutable, but they do exist. They exist because being a professional involves, by definition, the assumption of a responsible attitude both toward the material with which the profession deals and toward society in general, which the profession unquestionably serves. That service, indeed, is the price of any profession's toleration by society. And the acceptance of money for professional services rendered is the criterion by which professionalism is determined in our society. This transaction is no guarantee of quality delivered, but it *is* a symbol of responsibility accepted. And once that responsibility is accepted, the workman must be at least morally worthy of his hire, however limited his skill or mental powers may be.

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Every mature musician, therefore, is a music critic. He is obliged to make musical judgments and to act upon them. This necessity obtains primarily, of course, with regard to the work of other musicians, living and dead, in so far as his work is at all a comment on this or an interpretation of it, which nine tenths, at least, of anybody's musical work is. And so even the composer, no less than the scholar, the pedagogue, the executant, and the reviewer, is constantly under the necessity of making a fair estimate, and a decently responsible one, of other people's musical work.

This first stage of this operation does not involve fairness at all. It consists of listening to a piece, or of reading it, rather in the way that a cook tastes food. This act of cognition, this beginning of acquaintance, is probably a more powerful determinant in our final judgments, the ones on which we act, than the subsequent cerebrations by which we endeavor to correct them are. And we cannot prepare for it by purifying the spirit. We do not need to, as a matter of fact, because curiosity is stronger than prejudice. Any musician, faced with a new piece, will listen. He will listen as long as he can, as long as it holds his attention.

The second stage of the first operation, after the initial tasting, is going on listening, the experience of having one's attention held. Not all pieces hold one's attention. One is sad when they don't, but one must never undervalue the fact of their doing or not doing so. Fatigue here is of no more importance than prejudice. In reasonable health, and awake, any musician will listen to music, to sound of any kind, rather than merely ruminate, just as a painter will observe or an athlete move around. If a musician can't keep his mind on a piece of music, that fact must be considered when he comes to formulating judgment.

The final stage of the first operation is the aftertaste, the image that the whole piece leaves in the mind for the first few moments after it ceases to be heard (I say *heard* because

reading a piece is hearing it in the mind, in however attenuated a fashion). This is as significant a part of its gustation as the first taste of it and the following of it through. It is a recalling of the whole while memory is fresh and before the operations of correction and reflection have been undertaken. Never must one forget, never does one forget hearing for the first time a work that has absorbed one from beginning to end and from which one has returned to ordinary life, as it were, shaken or beatified, as from a trip to the moon or to the Grecian Isles.

All new music does not produce this effect. But the degree to which it does is as valuable a datum for judgment as any that can be found in subsequent analyses. A great deal of subsequent analysis, as a matter of fact, is a search for the reasons why the piece did or did not hold one's attention on first hearing. And the initial taste or distaste for its qualities will constantly return to plague one's researches or to illumine them, to discourage or to inspire one in the process of making fuller acquaintance.

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Making fuller acquaintance is the second operation of judgment. If first acquaintance has proved agreeable or interesting, one undertakes the second. The undertaking is a result of first judgment, though not necessarily of reflection. The whole first operation, let me insist, is spontaneous; and so is the initiation of the second. At this point, however, spontaneity ceases to be the main highway to experience, or guide to knowledge.

We must now amplify and correct our first impression. If the first impression was gained from auditory means, from hearing only, we must now see the score. If it was gained from a score, we must now hear the work in execution. Many pieces look better than they sound, and even more of them sound better on first hearing than their design justifies—because sound is usually pleasant whether or not high intrinsic interest of an

expressive or textural nature is present. In the case of executant musicians there is a constant shifting, during the study of a work, between score and execution, each stimulating and correcting the other till the artist's interpretation is fully formed as a concept and completely clothed in sound.

At this point there is material for a reflected judgment, and one formulates that judgment if there is a necessity for doing so. Otherwise one continues to study and to correct until interest flags. The third operation of judgment can be undertaken only after a period of rest, or vacation from the subject. Here the acquisition of experience and those shifts in the center of emotional experience that come from growing older are capable of lighting up the work in a new way. Sometimes they make it appear nobler and more interesting; sometimes they show up shoddy material or poor workmanship; sometimes one can't see why one ever bothered with the piece at all. As in reading old love letters or reviving an old quarrel, one's former association is now an element to be dealt with. It involves one in loyalty or ruthlessness, in any case in lots of remembering. The music is no longer new and shining; nor has it been kept bright by continual use. It has acquired a patina that must be rubbed away before one can see the object as anything like its old self. Restudy and rehearing are necessary if a new judgment has to be made.

No judgment, of course, is ever final or permanent. At any stage of musical acquaintance action may become necessary; one may have undertaken to perform the work or to explain it to students or to describe it in public. For any of these purposes one must formulate some kind of judgment—if not about its value, at least about its nature.

This formulation can take place at any point. Reviewers describe new music from one hearing, as pedagogues criticize student compositions or performances from one reading. In nine cases out of ten this is sufficient for the purpose, and no injustice is done. Works of standard repertory are more often

described after both hearing and study—that is to say, after the second phase of acquaintance, such acquaintance being easily available nowadays to all, though the press is not invariably so well prepared in standard repertory by score study as it might be, and many members of the teaching profession have not so broad a prepared repertory as might be desired for the answering of student questions and for exposing to the young all the kinds of music that there are. The press in general tends to express judgments of new work from hearing only, just as historians, especially those dealing with remote periods, are obliged to describe from score a great deal of music that they have never heard at all.

In order to make a fair judgment from only the first stage of acquaintance, either from hearing or from reading, everybody is obliged to have recourse to the aid of clues and clinical signs. The clinical signs of quality are (1) a certain strangeness in the musical texture, (2) the ability of a work to hold one's attention, (3) one's ability to remember it vividly, and (4) the presence of technical invention, such as novelty of rhythm, of contrapuntal, harmonic, melodic, or instrumental device. The pattern that a score makes on a page can be enticing, too, even before one starts to read it. In the matter of attention, it is not germane that one should be either delighted or annoyed. What counts is whether one is impelled to go on listening.

It is necessary to keep wary, too, and to examine one's mind for possible failure to make the cardinal distinctions. These are: (1) design versus execution, or the piece itself as distinct from its presentation; (2) the expressive power of the work as distinguished from its formal musical interest; and (3) a convincing emotional effect versus a meretricious one. One must ask oneself always, "Have I heard a pretty piece or just some pretty playing?" "Have I been listening to sentiment or brilliance, counterpoint or profundity?" "Have I been moved or merely impressed?"

Study will provide answers to all these questions; but when one has to act quickly, one must assume that one's first impression, so far as it goes, is a true view. In the case of successive contradictory impressions, the first, I think, tends to survive.

First one votes about a piece, spontaneously, sincerely, and more often than not, permanently. One adopts it or rejects it. Liking is not necessary for adoption, but one must be interested. In that case one can study the work further with profit. In the other case one forgets it. After study, one can forget it too, but not completely. In this case one can revisit it after a time. But at any time when the formulation of a judgment or opinion is found to be desirable, that formulation must be based on a description of the work. The techniques of musical description are:—

1. *Stylistic* identification, its period or school, as recognizable from internal evidence, from the technical procedures employed. These answer the question "What is it like?"

2. *Expressive* identification, its depiction of the cadences of speech, of bodily movements, or of feelings (that whole series of anxiety-and-relief patterns that constitutes emotional life). This decodifying is a more difficult operation but also a more important one, since one can, if necessary, neglect stylistic differences or even abstract them from the problem, whereas one cannot perform, communicate, or in any other way use a piece of music until one has found an answer, correct or incorrect, to the question "What is it about?"

3. The classical aids to memory. These are the known methods of melodic, harmonic, orchestral, and formal analysis. They are of little value without stylistic and expressive identification, but they help one to remember detail, provided one has first understood the whole. Analysis is an indispensable procedure, but the analysis of a given piece is valueless to anyone who does not have some previous knowledge of the work. That is why one must first, in describing a work, answer the

questions "What is it like?" and "What is it about?" before attempting to answer "How does it go?"

4. The fourth procedure of musical description is verbal formulation. This is, of course, a literary rather than a musical problem; but no one escapes it, not the teachers, the conductors, or the string-quartet players any more than the historians or the journalists. In some of the musical branches it is easier than others. Vocalism is particularly hard to teach otherwise than by example, or to describe in any circumstance, because there is no standard vocabulary for the purpose. Instrumental terminology is richer, though most of this is borrowed from the language of painting. Composition is chiefly described in metaphor, though the stylistic and expressive identifications do have a scholastic terminology. That for styles follows the history of the visual arts except for the years between 1775, say, and 1810, where the visual artists discern a neo-classic period and the musicians a Classical one (with a capital C). The classification of subject matter as strophic, choric, or spastic is elementary; but the spastic division, which includes so much of our grander repertory, is incapable of further precision save through poetic allusion. The same is true of musical landscape painting. Here one must use similes; there is no other way.

You will note that I have said nothing about communicating one's passion about a work. I have not mentioned it because it presents no problem; it takes place automatically and inevitably. What is most interesting about any musical judgment is the description and analysis on which it is based—or, if you like, since the judgment is likely to precede the analysis, by which it is defended. This is revelatory and stimulating. The fact that one man likes or does not like a given piece will influence nobody. The fact that he considers that piece to be, shall we say, more like a newspaper editorial than a direct transcript of personal sentiments is, however, right or wrong,

convincing or foolish, worth following up, if only for refutation.

Nobody has to be right. Any opinion is legitimate to act on, provided one accepts in advance the responsibilities of that action. Any opinion is legitimate to express that can be stated in clear language. And any opinion at all is legitimate to hold. As I said before, it is not the yes or no of a judgment that is valuable to other people, though one's original yes or no may have been itself the determinant of a whole lifetime's activity. What other people get profit from following is that activity. That is why, just as an emotional reaction is more significant for its force than for its direction, a musical judgment is of value to others less for the conclusions reached than for the methods by which these have been, not even arrived at, but elaborated, defended, and expressed.

Here is the terrain where a man's professional qualifications show up. The instinct for judging music is universal; acting on musical judgments is a privilege of the profession. The art of formulating musical judgments is chiefly the art of describing music. At this exercise it is desirable to be skillful and, as often as possible, convincing. But it is the skill that counts—the skill or gift, if you will, of understanding and explaining; at least of explaining that such and such is, for the present, one's understanding of the matter.

The foregoing is, for the present, my understanding of the chief procedures involved in the formation of musical judgments. The *formulation* of these in clear language is another subject. That belongs to the English department. It cannot, however, with impunity be neglected by musicians, since poor verbal expression can become as expensive a habit as poor judgment. When young people ask one how to prepare themselves for musical criticism as a profession, the double reply is obligatory: "Study music and learn to write."

# The Principles of Newspeak

GEORGE ORWELL

NEWSPEAK<sup>1</sup> was the official language of Oceania and had been devised to meet the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism. In the year 1984 there was not as yet anyone who used Newspeak as his sole means of communication, either in speech or writing. The leading articles in the *Times* were written in it, but this was a tour de force which could only be carried out by a specialist. It was expected that Newspeak would have finally superseded Oldspeak (or Standard English, as we should call it) by about the year 2050. Meanwhile it gained ground steadily, all Party members tending to use Newspeak words and grammatical constructions more and more in their everyday speech. The version in use in 1984, and embodied in the Ninth and Tenth Editions of the Newspeak dictionary, was a provisional one, and contained many superfluous words and archaic formations which were due to be suppressed later. It is with the final, perfected version, as embodied in the Eleventh Edition of the dictionary, that we are concerned here.

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From *Nineteen Eighty-four*, by George Orwell. Copyright, 1949, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

<sup>1</sup>In his novel *Nineteen Eighty-four*, George Orwell described the life of a petty bureaucrat in Oceania, a totalitarian state made up of the present European and American continents. As an appendix to the novel Orwell prepared this essay on the official language of Oceania.



The purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought—that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc—should be literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words. Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods. This was done partly by the invention of new words, but chiefly by eliminating undesirable words and by stripping such words as remained of unorthodox meanings, and so far as possible of all secondary meanings whatever. To give a single example. The word *free* still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be used in such statements as “This dog is free from lice” or “This field is free from weeds.” It could not be used in its old sense of “politically free” or “intellectually free,” since political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless. Quite apart from the suppression of definitely heretical words, reduction of vocabulary was regarded as an end in itself, and no word that could be dispensed with was allowed to survive. Newspeak was designed not to extend but to *diminish* the range of thought, and this purpose was indirectly assisted by cutting the choice of words down to a minimum.

Newspeak was founded on the English language as we now know it, though many Newspeak sentences, even when not containing newly created words, would be barely intelligible to an English-speaker of our own day. Newspeak words were divided into three distinct classes, known as the A vocabulary, the B vocabulary (also called compound words), and the C vocabulary. It will be simpler to discuss each class separately,

but the grammatical peculiarities of the language can be dealt with in the section devoted to the A vocabulary, since the same rules held good for all three categories.

*The A vocabulary.* The A vocabulary consisted of the words needed for the business of everyday life—for such things as eating, drinking, working, putting on one's clothes, going up and down stairs, riding in vehicles, gardening, cooking, and the like. It was composed almost entirely of words that we already possess—words like *hit, run, dog, tree, sugar, house, field*—but in comparison with the present-day English vocabulary, their number was extremely small, while their meanings were far more rigidly defined. All ambiguities and shades of meaning had been purged out of them. So far as it could be achieved, a Newspeak word of this class was simply a staccato sound expressing *one* clearly understood concept. It would have been quite impossible to use the A vocabulary for literary purposes or for political or philosophical discussion. It was intended only to express simple, purposive thoughts, usually involving concrete objects or physical actions.

The grammar of Newspeak had two outstanding peculiarities. The first of these was an almost complete interchangeability between different parts of speech. Any word in the language (in principle this applied even to very abstract words such as *if* or *when*) could be used either as verb, noun, adjective, or adverb. Between the verb and the noun form, when they were of the same root, there was never any variation, this rule of itself involving the destruction of many archaic forms. The word *thought*, for example, did not exist in Newspeak. Its place was taken by *think*, which did duty for both noun and verb. No etymological principle was involved here; in some cases it was the original noun that was chosen for retention, in other cases the verb. Even where a noun and verb of kindred meaning were not etymologically connected, one or other of them was frequently suppressed. There was, for ex-

ample, no such word as *cut*, its meaning being sufficiently covered by the noun-verb *knife*. Adjectives were formed by adding the suffix *-ful* to the noun-verb, and adverbs by adding *-wise*. Thus, for example, *speedful* meant "rapid" and *speed-wise* meant "quickly." Certain of our present-day adjectives, such as *good*, *strong*, *big*, *black*, *soft*, were retained, but their total number was very small. There was little need for them, since almost any adjectival meaning could be arrived at by adding *-ful* to a noun-verb. None of the now-existing adverbs was retained, except for a very few already ending in *-wise*; the *-wise* termination was invariable. The word *well*, for example, was replaced by *goodwise*.

In addition, any word—this again applied in principle to every word in the language—could be negated by adding the affix *un-*, or could be strengthened by the affix *plus-*, or, for still greater emphasis, *doubleplus-*. Thus, for example, *uncold* meant "warm," while *pluscold* and *doublepluscold* meant, respectively, "very cold" and "superlatively cold." It was also possible, as in present-day English, to modify the meaning of almost any word by prepositional affixes such as *ante-*, *post-*, *up-*, *down-*, etc. By such methods it was found possible to bring about an enormous diminution of vocabulary. Given, for instance, the word *good*, there was no need for such a word as *bad*, since the required meaning was equally well—indeed, better—expressed by *ungood*. All that was necessary, in any case where two words formed a natural pair of opposites, was to decide which of them to suppress. *Dark*, for example, could be replaced by *unlight*, or *light* by *undark*, according to preference.

The second distinguishing mark of Newspeak grammar was its regularity. Subject to a few exceptions which are mentioned below, all inflections followed the same rules. Thus, in all verbs the preterite and the past participle were the same and ended in *-ed*. The preterite of *steal* was *stealed*, the preterite of *think* was *thinked*, and so on throughout the language, all

such forms as *swam, gave, brought, spoke, taken*, etc., being abolished. All plurals were made by adding *-s* or *-es* as the case might be. The plurals of *man, ox, life* were *mans, oxes, lifes*. Comparison of adjectives was invariably made by adding *-er, -est* (*good, gooder, goodest*), irregular forms and the *more, most* formation being suppressed.

The only classes of words that were still allowed to inflect irregularly were the pronouns, the relatives, the demonstrative adjectives, and the auxiliary verbs. All of these followed their ancient usage, except that *whom* had been scrapped as unnecessary, and the *shall, should* tenses had been dropped, all their uses being covered by *will* and *would*. There were also certain irregularities in word-formation arising out of the need for rapid and easy speech. A word which was difficult to utter, or was liable to be incorrectly heard, was held to be ipso facto a bad word; occasionally therefore, for the sake of euphony, extra letters were inserted into a word or an archaic formation was retained. But this need made itself felt chiefly in connection with the B vocabulary. *Why* so great an importance was attached to ease of pronunciation will be made clear later in this essay.

*The B vocabulary.* The B vocabulary consisted of words which had been deliberately constructed for political purposes: words, that is to say, which not only had in every case a political implication, but were intended to impose a desirable mental attitude upon the person using them. Without a full understanding of the principles of Ingsoc it was difficult to use these words correctly. In some cases they could be translated into Oldspeak, or even into words taken from the A vocabulary, but this usually demanded a long paraphrase and always involved the loss of certain overtones. The B words were a sort of verbal shorthand, often packing whole ranges of ideas into a few syllables, and at the same time more accurate and forcible than ordinary language.

The B words were in all cases compound words.\* They consisted of two or more words, or portions of words, welded together in an easily pronounceable form. The resulting amalgam was always a noun-verb, and inflected according to the ordinary rules. To take a single example: the word *goodthink*, meaning, very roughly, "orthodoxy," or, if one chose to regard it as a verb, "to think in an orthodox manner." This inflected as follows: noun-verb, *goodthink*; past tense and past participle, *goodthinked*; present participle, *goodthinking*; adjective, *goodthinkful*; adverb, *goodthinkwise*; verbal noun, *goodthinker*.

The B words were not constructed on any etymological plan. The words of which they were made up could be any parts of speech, and could be placed in any order and mutilated in any way which made them easy to pronounce while indicating their derivation. In the word *crimethink* (thought-crime), for instance, the *think* came second, whereas in *think-pol* (Thought Police) it came first, and in the latter word *police* had lost its second syllable. Because of the greater difficulty in securing euphony, irregular formations were commoner in the B vocabulary than in the A vocabulary. For example, the adjectival forms of *Minitrue*, *Minipax*, and *Miniluv* were, respectively, *Minitruthful*, *Minipeaceful*, and *Minilovely*, simply because *-trueful*, *paxful*, and *lovely* were slightly awkward to pronounce. In principle, however, all B words could inflect, and all inflected in exactly the same way.

Some of the B words had highly subtilized meanings, barely intelligible to anyone who had not mastered the language as a whole. Consider, for example, such a typical sentence from a *Times* leading article as *Oldthinkers unbellyfeel Ingsoc*. The shortest rendering that one could make of this in Oldspeak would be: "Those whose ideas were formed before the Revolu-

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\* Compound words, such as *speakwrite*, were of course to be found in the A vocabulary, but these were merely convenient abbreviations and had no special ideological color.

tion cannot have a full emotional understanding of the principles of English Socialism." But this is not an adequate translation. To begin with, in order to grasp the full meaning of the Newspeak sentence quoted above, one would have to have a clear idea of what is meant by *Ingsoc*. And, in addition, only a person thoroughly grounded in Ingsoc could appreciate the full force of the word *bellyfeel*, which implied a blind, enthusiastic acceptance difficult to imagine today; or of the word *oldthink*, which was inextricably mixed up with the idea of wickedness and decadence. But the special function of certain Newspeak words, of which *oldthink* was one, was not so much to express meanings as to destroy them. These words, necessarily few in number, had had their meanings extended until they contained within themselves whole batteries of words which, as they were sufficiently covered by a single comprehensive term, could now be scrapped and forgotten. The greatest difficulty facing the compilers of the Newspeak dictionary was not to invent new words, but, having invented them, to make sure what they meant: to make sure, that is to say, what ranges of words they canceled by their existence.

As we have already seen in the case of the word *free*, words which had once borne a heretical meaning were sometimes retained for the sake of convenience, but only with the undesirable meanings purged out of them. Countless other words such as *honor*, *justice*, *morality*, *internationalism*, *democracy*, *science*, and *religion* had simply ceased to exist. A few blanket words covered them, and, in covering them, abolished them. All words grouping themselves round the concepts of liberty and equality, for instance, were contained in the single word *crimethink*, while all words grouping themselves round the concepts of objectivity and rationalism were contained in the single word *oldthink*. Greater precision would have been dangerous. What was required in a Party member was an outlook similar to that of the ancient Hebrew who knew, without knowing much else, that all nations other than his own wor-

shipped "false gods." He did not need to know that these gods were called Baal, Osiris, Moloch, Ashtaroth, and the like; probably the less he knew about them the better for his orthodoxy. He knew Jehovah and the commandments of Jehovah; he knew, therefore, that all gods with other names or other attributes were false gods. In somewhat the same way, the Party member knew what constituted right conduct, and in exceedingly vague, generalized terms he knew what kinds of departure from it were possible. His sexual life, for example, was entirely regulated by the two Newspeak words *sexcrime* (sexual immorality) and *goodsex* (chastity). *Sexcrime* covered all sexual misdeeds whatever. It covered fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and other perversions, and, in addition, normal intercourse practiced for its own sake. There was no need to enumerate them separately, since they were all equally culpable, and, in principle, all punishable by death. In the C vocabulary, which consisted of scientific and technical words, it might be necessary to give specialized names to certain sexual aberrations, but the ordinary citizen had no need of them. He knew what was meant by *goodsex*—that is to say, normal intercourse between man and wife, for the sole purpose of begetting children, and without physical pleasure on the part of the woman; all else was *sexcrime*. In Newspeak it was seldom possible to follow a heretical thought further than the perception that it *was* heretical; beyond that point the necessary words were nonexistent.

No word in the B vocabulary was ideologically neutral. A great many were euphemisms. Such words, for instance, as *joycamp* (forced-labor camp) or *Minipax* (Ministry of Peace, i.e., Ministry of War) meant almost the exact opposite of what they appeared to mean. Some words, on the other hand, displayed a frank and contemptuous understanding of the real nature of Oceanic society. An example was *prolefeed*, meaning the rubbishy entertainment and spurious news which the Party handed out to the masses. Other words, again, were

ambivalent, having the connotation "good" when applied to the Party and "bad" when applied to its enemies. But in addition there were great numbers of words which at first sight appeared to be mere abbreviations and which derived their ideological color not from their meaning but from their structure.

So far as it could be contrived, everything that had or might have political significance of any kind was fitted into the B vocabulary. The name of every organization, or body of people, or doctrine, or country, or institution, or public building, was invariably cut down into the familiar shape; that is, a single easily pronounced word with the smallest number of syllables that would preserve the original derivation. In the Ministry of Truth, for example, the Records Department, in which Winston Smith worked, was called *Recdep*, the Fiction Department was called *Ficdep*, the Teleprograms Department was called *Teledep*, and so on. This was not done solely with the object of saving time. Even in the early decades of the twentieth century, telescoped words and phrases had been one of the characteristic features of political language; and it had been noticed that the tendency to use abbreviations of this kind was most marked in totalitarian countries and totalitarian organizations. Examples were such words as *Nazi*, *Gestapo*, *Comintern*, *Inprecorr*, *Agitprop*. In the beginning the practice had been adopted as it were instinctively, but in Newspeak it was used with a conscious purpose. It was perceived that in thus abbreviating a name one narrowed and subtly altered its meaning, by cutting out most of the associations that would otherwise cling to it. The words *Communist International*, for instance, call up a composite picture of universal human brotherhood, red flags, barricades, Karl Marx, and the Paris Commune. The word *Comintern*, on the other hand, suggests merely a tightly knit organization and a well-defined body of doctrine. It refers to something almost as easily recognized, and as limited in purpose, as a chair or a



table. *Comintern* is a word that can be uttered almost without taking thought, whereas *Communist International* is a phrase over which one is obliged to linger at least momentarily. In the same way, the associations called up by a word like *Ministrie* are fewer and more controllable than those called up by *Ministry of Truth*. This accounted not only for the habit of abbreviating whenever possible, but also for the almost exaggerated care that was taken to make every word easily pronounceable.

In Newspeak, euphony outweighed every consideration other than exactitude of meaning. Regularity of grammar was always sacrificed to it when it seemed necessary. And rightly so, since what was required, above all for political purposes, were short clipped words of unmistakable meaning which could be uttered rapidly and which roused the minimum of echoes in the speaker's mind. The words of the B vocabulary even gained in force from the fact that nearly all of them were very much alike. Almost invariably these words—*good-think*, *Minipax*, *prolefeed*, *sexcrime*, *joycamp*, *Ingsoc*, *bellyfeel*, *thinkpol*, and countless others—were words of two or three syllables, with the stress distributed equally between the first syllable and the last. The use of them encouraged a gabbling style of speech, at once staccato and monotonous. And this was exactly what was aimed at. The intention was to make speech, and especially speech on any subject not ideologically neutral, as nearly as possible independent of consciousness. For that purpose of everyday life it was no doubt necessary, or sometimes necessary, to reflect before speaking, but a Party member called upon to make a political or ethical judgment should be able to spray forth the correct opinions as automatically as a machine gun spraying forth bullets. His training fitted him to do this, the language gave him an almost foolproof instrument, and the texture of the words, with their harsh sound and a certain willful ugliness which was in accord with the spirit of Ingsoc, assisted the process still further.

So did the fact of having very few words to choose from. Relative to our own, the Newspeak vocabulary was tiny, and new ways of reducing it were constantly being devised. Newspeak, indeed, differed from almost all other languages in that its vocabulary grew smaller instead of larger every year. Each reduction was a gain, since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought. Ultimately it was hoped to make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher brain centers at all. This aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word *duckspeak*, meaning "to quack like a duck." Like various other words in the B vocabulary, *duckspeak* was ambivalent in meaning. Provided that the opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but praise, and when the *Times* referred to one of the orators of the Party as a *double-plusgood duckspeaker* it was paying a warm and valued compliment.

*The C vocabulary.* The C vocabulary was supplementary to the others and consisted entirely of scientific and technical terms. These resembled the scientific terms in use today, and were constructed from the same roots, but the usual care was taken to define them rigidly and strip them of undesirable meanings. They followed the same grammatical rules as the words in the other two vocabularies. Very few of the C words had any currency either in everyday speech or in political speech. Any scientific worker or technician could find all the words he needed in the list devoted to his own specialty, but he seldom had more than a smattering of the words occurring in the other lists. Only a very few words were common to all lists, and there was no vocabulary expressing the function of Science as a habit of mind, or a method of thought, irrespective of its particular branches. There was, indeed, no word for "Science," any meaning that it could possibly bear being already sufficiently covered by the word *Ingsoc*.

From the foregoing account it will be seen that in Newspeak the expression of unorthodox opinions, above a very low level, was well-nigh impossible. It was of course possible to utter heresies of a very crude kind, a species of blasphemy. It would have been possible, for example, to say *Big Brother is ungood*. But this statement, which to an orthodox ear merely conveyed a self-evident absurdity, could not have been sustained by reasoned argument, because the necessary words were not available. Ideas inimical to Ingsoc could only be entertained in a vague wordless form, and could only be named in very broad terms which lumped together and condemned whole groups of heresies without defining them in doing so. One could, in fact, only use Newspeak for unorthodox purposes by illegitimately translating some of the words back into Oldspeak. For example, *All mans are equal* was a possible Newspeak sentence, but only in the same sense in which *All men are redhaired* is a possible Oldspeak sentence. It did not contain a grammatical error, but it expressed a palpable untruth, i.e., that all men are of equal size, weight, or strength. The concept of political equality no longer existed, and this secondary meaning had accordingly been purged out of the word *equal*. In 1984, when Oldspeak was still the normal means of communication, the danger theoretically existed that in using Newspeak words one might remember their original meanings. In practice it was not difficult for any person well grounded in *doublethink* to avoid doing this, but within a couple of generations even the possibility of such a lapse would have vanished. A person growing up with Newspeak as his sole language would no more know that *equal* had once had the secondary meaning of "politically equal," or that *free* had once meant "intellectually free," than, for instance, a person who had never heard of chess would be aware of the secondary meanings attaching to *queen* and *rook*. There would be many crimes and errors which it would be beyond his power to commit, simply because they were nameless and therefore unim-

aginable. And it was to be foreseen that with the passage of time the distinguishing characteristics of Newspeak would become more and more pronounced—its words growing fewer and fewer, their meanings more and more rigid, and the chance of putting them to improper uses always diminishing.

When Oldspeak had been once and for all superseded, the last link with the past would have been severed. History had already been rewritten, but fragments of the literature of the past survived here and there, imperfectly censored, and so long as one retained one's knowledge of Oldspeak it was possible to read them. In the future such fragments, even if they chanced to survive, would be unintelligible and untranslatable. It was impossible to translate any passage of Oldspeak into Newspeak unless it either referred to some technical process or some very simple everyday action, or was already orthodox (*goodthinkful* would be the Newspeak expression) in tendency. In practice this meant that no book written before approximately 1960 could be translated as a whole. Pre-revolutionary literature could only be subjected to ideological translation—that is, alteration in sense as well as language. Take for example the well-known passage from the Declaration of Independence:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government . . .*

It would have been quite impossible to render this into Newspeak while keeping to the sense of the original. The nearest

one could come to doing so would be to swallow the whole passage up in the single word *crimethink*. A full translation could only be an ideological translation, whereby Jefferson's words would be changed into a panegyric on absolute government.

A good deal of the literature of the past was, indeed, already being transformed in this way. Considerations of prestige made it desirable to preserve the memory of certain historical figures, while at the same time bringing their achievements into line with the philosophy of Ingsoc. Various writers, such as Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Byron, Dickens, and some others were therefore in process of translation; when the task had been completed, their original writings, with all else that survived of the literature of the past, would be destroyed. These translations were a slow and difficult business, and it was not expected that they would be finished before the first or second decade of the twenty-first century. There were also large quantities of merely utilitarian literature—indispensable technical manuals and the like—that had to be treated in the same way. It was chiefly in order to allow time for the preliminary work of translation that the final adoption of Newspeak had been fixed for so late a date as 2050.

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## 4. A FACTUAL BIOGRAPHY

### *Guy Fawkes*

SIR SIDNEY LEE

FAWKES, GUY (1570-1606), conspirator, only son and second child of Edward Fawkes of York, by his wife, Edith, was baptised at the church of St. Michael-le-Belfrey, York, 16 April 1570. The father, a notary or proctor of the ecclesiastical courts and advocate of the consistory court of the Archbishop of York, was second son of William Fawkes, registrar of the exchequer court of York diocese from 1541 till his death about 1565. Guy's paternal grandmother was Ellen Haryngton, daughter of an eminent York merchant, who was lord mayor of that city in 1536; she died in 1575, and bequeathed to Guy her best whistle and an angel of gold. His father was buried in York Minster 17 Jan. 1578-9; he left no will, and his whole estate devolved on his son 'Guye,' at the time barely nine years old. There can be no question that his parents were protestants; it is known that they were regular communicants at the parish church of St. Michael-le-Belfrey, and it is a fair inference that Guy was brought up in their belief. He attended the free school at York, where Thomas Morton, afterwards bishop of Durham, and Sir Thomas Cheke, besides John and Christopher Wright, afterwards his fellow-conspirators, were among his schoolfellows. In 1585 his father's brother, Thomas Fawkes, died, leaving the bulk of his estate to Guy's sisters Elizabeth

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and Anne, and a trifling legacy to his nephew—'my gold rynge and my bedd, and one payre of shetes with th' appurtenances.' Shortly afterwards his mother married a second time. Her husband was Dionis Baynbrigge of Scotton, Yorkshire, and Guy and his sisters removed with their mother to Scotton. Their stepfather, son of Peter Baynbrigge, by Frances Vava-sour of Weston, was closely related with many great catholic families, and was doubtless of the same persuasion himself, while some near neighbours, named Pulleyn, were strong adherents of the old faith. Guy was greatly influenced by his new surroundings; the effects of his earlier training soon faded, and he became a zealous catholic. In 1591 he came of age, and succeeded to full possession of his father's property. On 14 Oct. 1591 he leased some houses and land in York to Christopher Lumley, a tailor, and soon afterwards made arrangements for disposing of the rest of his estate. In 1593 he left England for Flanders, where he enlisted as a soldier of fortune in the Spanish army. In 1595 he was present at the capture of Calais by the Spaniards under Archduke Albert, and, according to the testimony of Father Greenway, was 'sought by all the most distinguished in the archduke's camp for nobility and virtue.' Sir William Stanley, the chief English catholic who had joined the Spanish army, thought highly of Fawkes, and on the death of Elizabeth directed Fawkes and Fawkes' old schoolfellow, Christopher Wright, to visit Philip III, with a view to securing relief for their catholic fellow-countrymen.

As soon as James I had ascended the throne, and had declared himself in favour of the penal laws, the Gunpowder plot was hatched. Its originators were Robert Catesby, John Wright, and Thomas Winter. Fawkes was well known to these men, but had no share in devising the conspiracy. Early in 1604 the conspirators still hoped that Spanish diplomacy might make their desperate remedy unnecessary. Velasco, the constable of Castile, was on his way to the court of James I to discuss the terms of a treaty of peace between Spain and England. Catesby

desired to communicate with him at Bergen. Winter was selected for the service about Easter, and Catesby invited Fawkes to accompany him. This was the first active part that Fawkes played in Catesby's dangerous schemes. The journey of Winter and Fawkes brought little result. Soon after their return Fawkes went by appointment to a house beyond Clement's Inn, and there, with four others (Catesby, Thomas Percy, Thomas Winter, and John Wright), took a solemn oath to keep secret all that should be proposed to him. He and Percy, a gentleman pensioner, knew nothing at the time of the proposed plot. But after the ceremony of the oath Percy and Fawkes were informed of the plan of blowing up the parliament house while the king was in the House of Lords. Both approved the proposal, and with the other conspirators withdrew to an upper room, where mass was performed and the sacrament administered by Father Gerard, the jesuit. On 24 May 1604 Percy, acting under Catesby's orders, hired a tenement adjoining the parliament house, in the cellars of which it was determined to construct a mine communicating with the neighbouring premises. Fawkes was directed to disguise himself as Percy's servant and to assume the name of Johnson. As he was quite unknown in London, the keys and the care of the house were entrusted to him. But on 7 July parliament was adjourned till the following February, and the conspirators separated to resume operations about November. In the autumn the penal laws against the catholics were enforced with renewed severity. The conspirators met at Michaelmas, and Fawkes was ordered to prepare the construction of the mine. A delay arose because the commissioners to treat of the union of England and Scotland resolved to meet in the house which Percy had hired, but about 11 Dec. 1604 the five original conspirators brought in tools and provisions by night and began operations in the cellar. The digging of the mine proved more difficult than was anticipated, and John Wright's brother Christopher and Robert Keyes, who had previously been sworn in, but had been told off to take



care of a house at Lambeth, where materials for the mine were collected, were sent for to take part in the mining work. Fawkes, dressed as a porter, acted as sentinel in the house, and for a fortnight none of his companions appeared above ground. Information reached Fawkes about Christmas that the meeting of parliament originally fixed for February had been deferred till the October following. Thereupon the conspirators separated, but they resumed work in February 1604-5. In January John Grant and Thomas Winter's brother Robert were informed of the undertaking, besides an old servant of Catesby named Bates, whose suspicions had been aroused. About March the conspirators hired in Percy's name an adjoining cellar, which ran immediately below the House of Lords, and which had just become vacant. Altering their plan, they abandoned the mine, and filled their newly acquired cellar with barrels of gunpowder and iron bars, concealing the explosives beneath lumber of all kinds.

In May 1605 the work was done, and a further adjournment took place. Fawkes was sent to Flanders to communicate the details of the plot to Sir William Stanley and the jesuit Owen. Stanley was in Spain, and Owen held out little hope that the conspiracy would meet with Stanley's approval. At the end of August Fawkes was again in London. He busied himself in replacing with dry barrels any in the cellar that were injured by damp, and learned that parliament was not to meet till 5 Nov. He took a lodging at 'one Mrs. Herbert's house, a widow that dwells on the backside of St. Clement's Church,' and when he found that his landlady suspected him of associating with Roman catholics, he hurriedly left. Mrs. Herbert stated that he was always 'in good clothes and full of money' (*Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser. ix. 277-9). About Michaelmas Sir Everard Digby, Ambrose Rookwood, and Francis Tresham, three wealthy country gentlemen, were added to the list of conspirators, and entrusted with the duty of providing armed men to second the attack on the government after the explo-

sion had taken place. At the same time the important work of firing the gunpowder was entrusted to Fawkes, whose coolness and courage had been remarkable throughout. A slow match was to be used which would allow him a quarter of an hour to make good his escape. His orders were to embark for Flanders as soon as the train was fired, and spread the news of the explosion on the continent.

As the day approached the conspirators discussed the possibility of warning their catholic friends in the House of Lords of their impending danger. Fawkes wished to protect Lord Montague. It was decided that it was allowable for individual conspirators to do what they could without specific warning to induce their friends to absent themselves from the parliament house on the fatal date. But Tresham was especially anxious to secure the safety of Lord Monteagle, and after the first discussion, met Catesby, Thomas Winter, and Fawkes at White Webbs in order to obtain their permission to give a distinct warning to his friend. Catesby and Winter were obdurate. On Saturday, 26 Oct., Lord Monteagle received an ambiguous letter entreating him to avoid attending the king at the opening of parliament. Monteagle showed it to Lord Salisbury the same day. The news soon reached Winter and Catesby. Fawkes, ignorant of this turn of affairs, was sent to examine the cellar on 30 Oct., and reported that it was untouched. By 31 Oct. the character of the plot was apprehended with much accuracy at court. But the ministers resolved to make no search in the parliament house till the day before the 5th, so that the conspirators might mature their plans. On Sunday, 3 Nov., a few of the leading conspirators met together and satisfied themselves that the details of the plot were unknown to the authorities. All except Fawkes prepared, however, to leave London at short notice. He undertook to watch the cellar by himself. Next day Suffolk, the lord chamberlain, accompanied by Monteagle, searched the parliament house. In the cellar they noticed abundance of coals and wood, and perceived Fawkes,

whom they described as 'a very bad and desperate fellow,' standing in a corner. They were told that Thomas Percy rented the cellar with the adjoining house. The officers left, without making any remark, and reported their observations to the king. Fawkes was alarmed, but resolved to apply the match to the gunpowder on the next appearance of danger, even if he perished himself. He went forth to give Percy warning, but returned to his post before midnight, and met on the threshold Sir Thomas Knyvett, a Westminster magistrate, and his attendants. The cellar was searched; the gunpowder discovered; Fawkes was bound, and on his person were discovered a watch, slow matches, and touchwood, while a dark lantern with a light in it was found near the cellar door. Fawkes declared that had he been in the cellar when Knyvett entered it, he would have 'blown him up, house, himself, and all.'

At one o'clock in the morning the council met in the king's bedchamber at Whitehall, and Fawkes, who betrayed neither fear nor excitement, was brought in under guard. He coolly declined to give any information about himself beyond stating that his name was Johnson, and persisted in absolute silence when interrogated as to his fellow-conspirators. He asserted that he was sorry for nothing but that the explosion had not taken place. [When asked by the king whether he did not regret his proposed attack on the royal family, he replied that a desperate disease required a dangerous remedy, and added that 'one of his objects was to blow the Scots back again into Scotland.] Fawkes was removed the same night to the Tower, and was subjected to further examination by the judges Popham and Coke, and Sir William Waad, lieutenant of the Tower, on each of the following days. A long series of searching questions was prepared by the king himself on 6 Nov. (cf. *Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser. viii. 369). Fawkes's name was discovered by a letter found upon him from Anne, Lady Vane, but no threats of torture could extort the names of his friends, nor any expression of regret for the crime he had meditated. To over-

come his obstinacy he was subjected to the rack, 'per gradus ad ima,' by royal warrant. Torture had the desired effect. On 8 Nov., although still 'stubborn and perverse,' he gave a history of the conspiracy without mentioning names. On the next day his resolution broke down, and he revealed the names of his fellow-conspirators, after learning that several had already been arrested at Holbeach. His confession is signed in a trembling hand 'Guido Fawkes.' Meanwhile parliament had met as arranged on 5 Nov., and on 9 Nov. had been adjourned till 21 Jan. On that day the 5th of November was set apart for ever as a day of thanksgiving. Guy Fawkes's name is still chiefly associated with the date. A proposal to inflict some extraordinary punishment on the offenders awaiting trial was wisely rejected. A special thanksgiving service was prepared for the churches, and many pamphlets, some in Latin verse, denounced the plotters.

On 27 Jan. 1605-6 Fawkes, with the two Winters, Grant, Rookwood, Keyes, and Bates, were tried before a special commission in Westminster Hall. All pleaded not guilty. Fawkes was asked by the lord chief justice, Popham, how he could raise such a plea after his confessions of guilt, and he replied that he would not retract his confession, but the indictment implicated 'the holy fathers' in the plot, which was unwarranted. All the prisoners were found guilty as soon as their confessions were read. Sir Everard Digby was then tried and convicted separately. Finally judgment of death was passed on all. On Friday, 31 Jan., Fawkes, with Winter, Rookwood, and Keyes, were drawn from the Tower to the old palace at Westminster, opposite the parliament house, where a scaffold was erected. Fawkes was the last to mount. He was weak and ill from torture, and had to be helped up the ladder. He spoke briefly, and asked forgiveness of the king and state.

A rare print of the plotters Fawkes, the two Wrights, the two Winters, Catesby, Percy, and Bates, was published in Holland by Simon Pass soon after their execution, and was many

times reissued. There is a copy in Caulfield's 'Memoirs of Remarkable Persons,' 1795, ii. 97. A contemporary representation of the execution by N. de Visscher is also extant, besides an elaborate design by Michael Droeshout entitled 'The Powder Treason, Propounded by Sattan, Approved by Anti-Christ,' which includes a portrait of 'Guydo Fauxe.' In Carleton's 'Thankfull Remembrance' is an engraving by F. Hulsius, showing 'G. Faux' with his lighted lantern in the neighbourhood of some barrels. A somewhat similar illustration appears in Vicars's 'Quintessence of Cruelty, a Master Peice of Treachery,' 1641, a translation from the Latin verse of Dr. (Francis) Herring, issued in 1606, and translated in 1610. In most of these drawings Fawkes's christian name is printed as 'Guydo' or 'Guido,' a variant of 'Guye,' which he seems to have acquired during his association with the Spaniards. A lantern, said to be the one employed by Fawkes in the cellar, is now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. A Latin inscription states that it was the gift of 'Robert Heywood, late proctor of the university, 4 April 1641.' Another lantern, to which the same tradition attaches, was sold from Rushden Hall, Northamptonshire, about 1830.

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## Introductory Comment

THE GENERAL purpose of the essays in the first section was to provide us with facts and explanations—and let them go at that. For the most part, the essays were not directly concerned with the meanings of their details in terms of the desires, aspirations, sufferings, frustrations, successes, joys, and defeats that make up the universal human condition, even when their facts set forth that a man did aspire, did undergo defeat, and so on. They did not explore very far the social, aesthetic, and ethical values of the things and events represented by their facts and explanations—except when such values served an incidental function in the communication of a limited form of information which was their main concern. Some evaluations were expressed indirectly by means of the tone in “When Conan Doyle Was Sherlock Holmes.” Interpretations and evaluations formed some of the “facts” upon which Thomson based his personal critical technique, described in “The Art of Judging Music.” And “The Principles of Newspeak” proved upon examination to be a notable exception among the essays of this section, for it was wholly occupied with values even though, paradoxically, one of the most effective means used to evaluate its subject matter was the ironic pretense maintained throughout of ignoring values altogether. But in the main the essays concentrated upon giving us information

Yet man is not interested just in facts and explanations. He wants to know what significance they have in his life: how they affect his welfare, how they can help him solve problems of personal relations, how they can help him understand the community, society, and nation in which he lives, how they can help him to enjoy a happier, more productive, more meaningful existence. His interest in such things is so great that it requires an effort of his will to think of the facts just by themselves. It is natural, therefore, that we should find on every hand essays that go beyond the factual essays of the first section: essays whose general purpose is to provide interpretations and evaluations of the facts and to permit free expression of attitudes. Newspaper editorials, historical essays, biographies that are more than compilations of data for reference books, reviews and



critical articles, political pamphlets, philosophical essays, monographs by social scientists—these and many others like them try to tell us how and why men live as they do and with what success. Some go still further and try to persuade us to undertake decisions and actions—to live according to a special set of standards.

Such essays are usually more complex than those which appeared in the first section, primarily because they are intended to do several things at once. They must point out more relationships among many more details as they study the significance of groups of facts in relation to such things as the character of our national culture (as in "Contributions of the West to American Democracy"), the literary merit of James Fenimore Cooper's fiction (as in "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences"), our search for a definition of the good life (as in "Aristocracy"), and countless other aspects of our physical and intellectual experiences. In pointing out these relationships they must frequently represent much of the infinitely rich and variable world in which the experiences take place. Since attitudes, as part of the evaluations are an important part of the total meaning of the essays, tones and the ideas and technical features used to express them are more significant than they were in the factual essays. Tones are also likely to be more subtle and difficult to define.

Analysis of these essays, therefore, is somewhat more difficult—and more rewarding. All of the technical features found in the essays of the first section will be found among these, and some of them—particularly connotative words and phrases, images, and rhythms—will play a more prominent part in the organizations. We are moving away from the simple, sometimes rather abstract writing of factual essays toward the structurally complex and frequently more concrete, vivid, and meaningful literary essays of the third section.

*Note:* Because they represent conflicting interpretations and evaluations of a common subject or because one is a good example of an opinion or a point of view discussed in another, some of the essays in this section can be studied together with advantage. What the reader learns from one of them may be useful in arriving at a proper understanding and evaluation of another. For instance, "Contributions of the West to American Democracy" and "The Romanticism of the Pioneer" offer quite different estimates of the effect of pioneers and the frontier on American culture. "A Plea for John Brown" illustrates well many of the observations made in "The Hero and Democracy" and furnishes an evaluation of John Brown wholly different from that presented in "Address at the Cooper Institute, New York."

# 1. ESSAYS INTERPRETING OUR CULTURE

## *Contributions of the West to American Democracy*

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER

POLITICAL thought in the period of the French Revolution tended to treat democracy as an absolute system applicable to all times and to all peoples, a system that was to be created by the act of the people themselves on philosophical principles. Ever since that era there has been an inclination on the part of writers on democracy to emphasize the analytical and theoretical treatment to the neglect of the underlying factors of historical development.

If, however, we consider the underlying conditions and forces that create the democratic type of government, and at times contradict the external forms to which the name democracy is applied, we shall find that under this name there have appeared a multitude of political types radically unlike in fact.

The careful student of history must, therefore, seek the explanation of the forms and changes of political institutions in the social and economic forces that determine them. To know that at any one time a nation may be called a democracy, an aristocracy, or a monarchy, is not so important as to know what

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are the social and economic tendencies of the state. These are the vital forces that work beneath the surface and dominate the external form. It is to changes in the economic and social life of a people that we must look for the forces that ultimately create and modify organs of political action. For the time, adaptation of political structure may be incomplete or concealed. Old organs will be utilized to express new forces, and so gradual and subtle will be the change that it may hardly be recognized. The pseudo-democracies under the Medici at Florence and under Augustus at Rome are familiar examples of this type. Or again, if the political structure be rigid, incapable of responding to the changes demanded by growth, the expansive forces of social and economic transformation may rend it in some catastrophe like that of the French Revolution. In all these changes both conscious ideals and unconscious social reorganization are at work.

These facts are familiar to the student, and yet it is doubtful if they have been fully considered in connection with American democracy. For a century at least, in conventional expression, Americans have referred to a "glorious Constitution" in explaining the stability and prosperity of their democracy. We have believed as a nation that other peoples had only to will our democratic institutions in order to repeat our own career.

In dealing with Western contributions to democracy, it is essential that the considerations which have just been mentioned shall be kept in mind. Whatever these contributions may have been, we find ourselves at the present time in an era of such profound economic and social transformation as to raise the question of the effect of these changes upon the democratic institutions of the United States. Within a decade four marked changes have occurred in our national development; taken together they constitute a revolution.

First, there is the exhaustion of the supply of free land and the closing of the movement of Western advance as an effective

factor in American development. The first rough conquest of the wilderness is accomplished, and that great supply of free lands which year after year has served to reinforce the democratic influences in the United States is exhausted. It is true that vast tracts of government land are still untaken, but they constitute the mountain and arid regions, only a small fraction of them capable of conquest, and then only by the application of capital and combined effort. The free lands that made the American pioneer have gone.

In the second place, contemporaneously with this there has been such a concentration of capital in the control of fundamental industries as to make a new epoch in the economic development of the United States. The iron, the coal, and the cattle of the country have all fallen under the domination of a few great corporations with allied interests, and by the rapid combination of the important railroad systems and steamship lines, in concert with these same forces, even the breadstuffs and the manufactures of the nation are to some degree controlled in a similar way. This is largely the work of the last decade. The development of the greatest iron mines of Lake Superior occurred in the early nineties, and in the same decade came the combination by which the coal and the coke of the country, and the transportation systems that connect them with the iron mines, have been brought under a few concentrated managements. Side by side with this concentration of capital has gone the combination of labor in the same vast industries. The one is in a certain sense the concomitant of the other, but the movement acquires an additional significance because of the fact that during the past fifteen years the labor class has been so recruited by a tide of foreign immigration that this class is now largely made up of persons of foreign parentage, and the lines of cleavage which begin to appear in this country between capital and labor have been accentuated by distinctions of nationality.

A third phenomenon connected with the two just mentioned

is the expansion of the United States politically and commercially into lands beyond the seas. A cycle of American development has been completed. Up to the close of the War of 1812, this country was involved in the fortunes of the European state system. The first quarter of a century of our national existence was almost a continual struggle to prevent ourselves being drawn into the European wars. At the close of that era of conflict, the United States set its face toward the West. It began the settlement and improvement of the vast interior of the country. Here was the field of our colonization, here the field of our political activity. This process being completed, it is not strange that we find the United States again involved in world-politics. The revolution that occurred four years ago, when the United States struck down that ancient nation under whose auspices the New World was discovered, is hardly yet more than dimly understood. The insular wreckage of the Spanish War, Porto Rico and the Philippines, with the problems presented by the Hawaiian Islands, Cuba, the Isthmian Canal, and China, all are indications of the new direction of the ship of state, and while we thus turn our attention overseas, our concentrated industrial strength has given us a striking power against the commerce of Europe that is already producing consternation in the Old World. Having completed the conquest of the wilderness, and having consolidated our interests, we are beginning to consider the relations of democracy and empire.

And fourth, the political parties of the United States now tend to divide on issues that involve the question of Socialism. The rise of the Populist party in the last decade, and the acceptance of so many of its principles by the Democratic party under the leadership of Mr. Bryan, show in striking manner the birth of new political ideas, the reformation of the lines of political conflict.

It is doubtful if in any ten years of American history more significant factors in our growth have revealed themselves.

The struggle of the pioneer farmers to subdue the arid lands of the Great Plains in the eighties was followed by the official announcement of the extinction of the frontier line in 1890. The dramatic outcome of the Chicago Convention of 1896 marked the rise into power of the representatives of Populistic change. Two years later came the battle of Manila, which broke down the old isolation of the nation, and started it on a path the goal of which no man can foretell; and finally, but two years ago came that concentration of which the billion and a half dollar steel trust and the union of the Northern continental railways are stupendous examples. Is it not obvious, then, that the student who seeks for the explanation of democracy in the social and economic forces that underlie political forms must make inquiry into the conditions that have produced our democratic institutions, if he would estimate the effect of these vast changes? As a contribution to this inquiry, let us now turn to an examination of the part that the West has played in shaping our democracy.

From the beginning of the settlement of America, the frontier regions have exercised a steady influence toward democracy. In Virginia, to take an example, it can be traced as early as the period of Bacon's Rebellion, a hundred years before our Declaration of Independence. The small landholders, seeing that their powers were steadily passing into the hands of the wealthy planters who controlled Church and State and lands, rose in revolt. A generation later, in the governorship of Alexander Spotswood, we find a contest between the frontier settlers and the property-holding classes of the coast. The democracy with which Spotswood had to struggle, and of which he so bitterly complained, was a democracy made up of small landholders, of the newer immigrants, and of indented servants, who at the expiration of their time of servitude passed into the interior to take up lands and engage in pioneer farming. The "War of the Regulation," just on the eve of the American Revolution, shows the steady persistence of this struggle

between the classes of the interior and those of the coast. The Declaration of Grievances which the back counties of the Carolinas then drew up against the aristocracy that dominated the politics of those colonies exhibits the contest between the democracy of the frontier and the established classes who apportioned the legislature in such fashion as to secure effective control of government. Indeed, in a period before the outbreak of the American Revolution, one can trace a distinct belt of democratic territory extending from the back country of New England down through western New York, Pennsylvania, and the South.

In each colony this region was in conflict with the dominant classes of the coast. It constituted a quasi-revolutionary area before the days of the Revolution, and it formed the basis on which the Democratic party was afterwards established. It was, therefore, in the West, as it was in the period before the Declaration of Independence, that the struggle for democratic development first revealed itself, and in that area the essential ideas of American democracy had already appeared. Through the period of the Revolution and of the Confederation a similar contest can be noted. On the frontier of New England, along the western border of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas, and in the communities beyond the Alleghany Mountains, there arose a demand of the frontier settlers for independent statehood based on democratic provisions. There is a strain of fierceness in their energetic petitions demanding self-government under the theory that every people have the right to establish their own political institutions in an area which they have won from the wilderness. Those revolutionary principles based on natural rights, for which the seaboard colonies were contending, were taken up with frontier energy in an attempt to apply them to the lands of the West. No one can read their petitions denouncing the control exercised by the wealthy landholders of the coast, appealing to the record of their conquest of the wilderness, and demanding the pos-

session of the lands for which they have fought the Indians, and which they had reduced by their ax to civilization, without recognizing in these frontier communities the cradle of a belligerent Western democracy. "A fool can sometimes put on his coat better than a wise man can do it for him,"—such is the philosophy of its petitioners. In this period also came the contests of the interior agricultural portion of New England against the coast-wise merchants and property-holders, of which Shay's Rebellion is the best known, although by no means an isolated instance.

By the time of the constitutional convention, this struggle for democracy had affected a fairly well-defined division into parties. Although these parties did not at first recognize their interstate connections, there were similar issues on which they split in almost all the States. The demands for an issue of paper money, the stay of execution against debtors, and the relief against excessive taxation were found in every colony in the interior agricultural regions. The rise of this significant movement wakened the apprehensions of the men of means, and in the debates over the basis of suffrage for the House of Representatives in the constitutional convention of 1787 leaders of the conservative party did not hesitate to demand that safeguards to the property should be furnished the coast against the interior. The outcome of the debate left the question of suffrage for the House of Representatives dependent upon the policy of the separate States. This was in effect imposing a property qualification throughout the nation as a whole, and it was only as the interior of the country developed that these restrictions gradually gave way in the direction of manhood suffrage.

All of these scattered democratic tendencies Jefferson combined, in the period of Washington's presidency, into the Democratic-Republican party. Jefferson was the first prophet of American democracy, and when we analyse the essential features of his gospel, it is clear that the Western influence was



the dominant element. Jefferson himself was born in the frontier region of Virginia, on the edge of the Blue Ridge, in the middle of the eighteenth century. His father was a pioneer. Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia" reveal clearly his conception that democracy should have an agricultural basis, and that manufacturing development and city life were dangerous to the purity of the body politic. Simplicity and economy in government, the right of revolution, the freedom of the individual, the belief that those who win the vacant lands are entitled to shape their own government in their own way,—these are all parts of the platform of political principles to which he gave his adhesion, and they are all elements eminently characteristic of the Western democracy into which he was born.

In the period of the Revolution he had brought in a series of measures which tended to throw the power of Virginia into the hands of the settlers in the interior rather than of the coastwise aristocracy. The repeal of the laws of entail and primogeniture would have destroyed the great estates on which the planting aristocracy based its power. The abolition of the Established Church would still further have diminished the influence of the coastwise party in favor of the dissenting sects of the interior. His scheme of general public education reflected the same tendency, and his demand for the abolition of slavery was characteristic of a representative of the West rather than of the old-time aristocracy of the coast. His sympathy with the Western expansion culminated in the Louisiana Purchase. In short, the tendencies of Jefferson's legislation were to replace the dominance of the planting aristocracy by the dominance of the interior class, which had sought in vain to achieve its liberties in the period of Bacon's Rebellion.

Nevertheless, Thomas Jefferson was the John the Baptist of democracy, not its Moses. Only with the slow setting of the tide of settlement farther and farther toward the interior did the democratic influence grow strong enough to take actual possession of the government. The period from 1800 to 1820

saw a steady increase in these tendencies. The established classes in New England and the South began to take alarm. Perhaps no better illustration of the apprehensions of the old-time Federal conservative can be given than these utterances of President Dwight, of Yale College, in the book of travels which he published in that period:—

The class of pioneers cannot live in regular society. They are too idle, too talkative, too passionate, too prodigal, and too shiftless to acquire either property or character. They are impatient of the restraints of law, religion, and morality, and grumble about the taxes by which the Rulers, Ministers, and Schoolmasters are supported. . . . After exposing the injustice of the community in neglecting to invest persons of such superior merit in public offices, in many an eloquent harangue uttered by many a kitchen fire, in every blacksmith shop, in every corner of the streets, and finding all their efforts vain, they become at length discouraged, and under the pressure of poverty, the fear of the gaol, and consciousness of public contempt, leave their native places and betake themselves to the wilderness.

Such was a conservative's impression of that pioneer movement of New England colonists who had spread up the valley of the Connecticut into New Hampshire, Vermont, and western New York in the period of which he wrote, and who afterwards went on to possess the Northwest. New England Federalism looked with a shudder at the democratic ideas of those who refused to recognize the established order. But in that period there came into the Union a sisterhood of frontier States—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri—with provisions for the franchise that brought in complete democracy.

Even the newly created States of the Southwest showed the tendency. The wind of democracy blew so strongly from the West, that even in the older States of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia, conventions were called, which liberalized their constitutions by strengthening the dem-

ocratic basis of the State. In the same time the labor population of the cities began to assert its power and its determination to share in government. Of this frontier democracy which now took possession of the nation, Andrew Jackson was the very personification. He was born in the backwoods of the Carolinas in the midst of the turbulent democracy that preceded the Revolution, and he grew up in the frontier State of Tennessee. In the midst of this region of personal feuds and frontier ideals of law, he quickly rose to leadership. The appearance of this frontiersman on the floor of Congress was an omen full of significance. He reached Philadelphia at the close of Washington's administration, having ridden on horseback nearly eight hundred miles to his destination. Gallatin, himself a Western man, describes Jackson as he entered the halls of Congress: "A tall, lank, uncouth-looking personage, with long locks of hair hanging over his face and a cue down his back tied in an eel-skin; his dress singular; his manners those of a rough backwoodsman." And Jefferson testified: "When I was President of the Senate he was a Senator, and he could never speak on account of the rashness of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly and as often choke with rage." At last the frontier in the person of its typical man had found a place in the Government. This six-foot backwoodsman, with blue eyes that could blaze on occasion, this choleric, impetuous, self-willed Scotch-Irish leader of men, this expert duelist, and ready fighter, this embodiment of the tenacious, vehement, personal West, was in politics to stay. The frontier democracy of that time had the instincts of the clansman in the days of Scotch border warfare. Vehement and tenacious as the democracy was, strenuously as each man contended with his neighbor for the spoils of the new country that opened before them, they all had respect for the man who best expressed their aspirations and their ideas. Every community had its hero. In the War of 1812 and the subsequent Indian fighting Jackson made good his claim, not only to the loyalty of the people of Tennessee,

but of the whole West, and even of the nation. He had the essential traits of the Kentucky and Tennessee frontier. It was a frontier free from the influence of European ideas and institutions. The men of the "Western World" turned their backs upon the Atlantic Ocean, and with a grim energy and self-reliance began to build up a society free from the dominance of ancient forms.

The Westerner defended himself and resented governmental restrictions. The duel and the blood-feud found congenial soil in Kentucky and Tennessee. The idea of the personality of law was often dominant over the organized machinery of justice. That method was best which was most direct and effective. The backwoodsman was intolerant of men who split hairs, or scrupled over the method of reaching the right. In a word, the unchecked development of the individual was the significant product of this frontier democracy. It sought rather to express itself by choosing a man of the people, than by the formation of elaborate governmental institutions.

It was because Andrew Jackson personified these essential Western traits that in his presidency he became the idol and the mouthpiece of the popular will. In his assault upon the Bank as an engine of aristocracy, and in his denunciation of nullification, he went directly to his object with the ruthless energy of a frontiersman. For formal law and the subtle ties of State sovereignty he had the contempt of a backwoodsman. Nor is it without significance that this typical man of the new democracy will always be associated with the triumph of the spoil system in national politics. To the new democracy of the West, office was an opportunity to exercise natural rights as an equal citizen of the community. Rotation in office served not simply to allow the successful man to punish his enemies and reward his friends, but it also furnished the training in the actual conduct of political affairs which every American claimed as his birthright. Only in a primitive democracy of the type of the United States in 1830 could such a system have existed with-

out the ruin of the State. National government in that period was no complex and nicely adjusted machine, and the evils of the system were long in making themselves fully apparent.

The triumph of Andrew Jackson marked the end of the old era of trained statesmen for the Presidency. With him began the era of the popular hero. Even Martin Van Buren, whom we think of in connection with the East, was born in a log house under conditions that were not unlike parts of the older West. Harrison was the hero of the Northwest, as Jackson had been of the Southwest. Polk was a typical Tennessean, eager to expand the nation, and Zachary Taylor was what Webster called a "frontier colonel." During the period that followed Jackson, power passed from the region of Kentucky and Tennessee to the border of the Mississippi. The natural democratic tendencies that had earlier shown themselves in the Gulf States were destroyed, however, by the spread of cotton culture, and the development of great plantations in that region. What had been typical of the democracy of the Revolutionary frontier and of the frontier of Andrew Jackson was now to be seen in the States between the Ohio and the Mississippi. As Andrew Jackson is the typical democrat of the former region, so Abraham Lincoln is the very embodiment of the pioneer period of the Old Northwest. Indeed, he is the embodiment of the democracy of the West. How can one speak of him except in the words of Lowell's great "Commemoration Ode":—

For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,  
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast  
Of the unexhausted West,  
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,  
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true,

His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,  
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,  
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;  
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,

Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,  
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.  
    Nothing of Europe here,  
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,  
Ere any names of Serf and Peer,  
Could Nature's equal scheme deface;  
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

The pioneer life from which Lincoln came differed in important respects from the frontier democracy typified by Andrew Jackson. Jackson's democracy was contentious, individualistic, and it sought the ideal of local self-government and expansion. Lincoln represents rather the pioneer folk who entered the forest of the great Northwest to chop out a home, to build up their fortunes in the midst of a continually ascending industrial movement. In the democracy of the Southwest, industrial development and city life were only minor factors, but to the democracy of the Northwest they were its very life. To widen the area of the clearing, to contend with one another for the mastery of the industrial resources of the rich provinces, to struggle for a place in the ascending movement of society, to transmit to one's offspring the chance for education, for industrial betterment, for the rise in life which the hardships of the pioneer existence denied to the pioneer himself, these were some of the ideals of the region to which Lincoln came. The men were commonwealth builders, industry builders. Whereas the type of hero in the Southwest was militant, in the Northwest he was industrial. It was in the midst of these "plain people," as he loved to call them, that Lincoln grew into manhood. As Emerson says: "He is the true history of the American people in his time." The years of his early life were the years when the democracy of the Northwest came into struggle with the institution of slavery which threatened to forbid the expansion of the democratic pioneer life in the West. In President Eliot's essay on "Five American Contributions to Civilization," he instances as one of the supreme tests of American democracy its

attitude upon the question of slavery. But if democracy chose wisely and worked effectively toward the solution of this problem, it must be remembered that Western democracy took the lead. The rail splitter himself became the nation's President in that fierce time of struggle, and armies of the woodsmen and pioneer farmers recruited in the Old Northwest made free the Father of Waters, marched through Georgia, and helped to force the struggle to a conclusion at Appomattox. The free pioneer democracy struck down the slave-holding aristocracy on its march to the West.

The last chapter in the development of Western democracy is the one that deals with its conquest over the vast spaces of the new West. At each new stage of Western development, the people have had to grapple with larger areas, with bigger combinations. The little colony of Massachusetts veterans that settled at Marietta received a land grant as large as the State of Rhode Island. The band of Connecticut pioneers that followed Moses Cleaveland to the Connecticut Reserve occupied a region as large as the parent State. The area which settlers of New England stock occupied on the prairies of northern Illinois surpassed the combined area of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Men who had become accustomed to the narrow valleys and the little towns of the East found themselves out on the boundless spaces of the West dealing with units of such magnitude as dwarfed their former experience. The Great Lakes, the Prairies, the Great Plains, the Rocky Mountains, the Mississippi and the Missouri, furnished new standards of measurement for the achievement of this industrial democracy. Individualism began to give way to coöperation and to governmental activity. Even in the earlier days of the democratic conquest of the wilderness, demands had been made upon the government for support in internal improvements, but this new West showed a growing tendency to call to its assistance the powerful arm of national authority. In

the period since the Civil War, the vast public domain has been donated to the individual farmer, to States for education, to railroads for the construction of transportation lines.

Moreover, with the advent of democracy in the last fifteen years upon the Great Plains, new physical conditions have presented themselves which have accelerated the social tendency of Western democracy. The pioneer farmer of the days of Lincoln could place his family on a flatboat, strike into the wilderness, cut out his clearing, and with little or no capital go on to the achievement of industrial independence. Even the homesteader on the Western prairies found it possible to work out a similar independent destiny, although the factor of transportation made a serious and increasing impediment to the free working-out of his individual career. But when the arid lands and the mineral resources of the Far West were reached, no conquest was possible by the old individual pioneer methods. Here expensive irrigation works must be constructed, coöperative activity was demanded in utilization of the water supply, capital beyond the reach of the small farmer was required. In a word, the physiographic province itself decreed that the destiny of this new frontier should be social rather than individual.

Magnitude of social achievement is the watchword of the democracy since the Civil War. From petty towns built in the marshes, cities arose whose greatness and industrial power are the wonder of our time. The conditions were ideal for the production of captains of industry. The old democratic admiration for the self-made man, its old deference to the rights of competitive individual development, together with the stupendous natural resources that opened to the conquest of the keenest and the strongest, gave such conditions of mobility as enabled the development of the large corporate industries which in our own decade have marked the West.

Thus, in brief, have been outlined the chief phases of the



development of Western democracy in the different areas which it has conquered. There has been a steady development of the industrial ideal, and a steady increase of the social tendency, in this later movement of Western democracy. While the individualism of the frontier, so prominent in the earliest days of the Western advance, has been preserved as an ideal, more and more these individuals struggling each with the other, dealing with vaster and vaster areas, with larger and larger problems, have found it necessary to combine under the leadership of the strongest. This is the explanation of the rise of those preëminent captains of industry whose genius has concentrated capital to control the fundamental resources of the nation. If now in the way of recapitulation, we try to pick out from the influences that have gone to the making of Western democracy the factors which constitute the net result of this movement, we shall have to mention at least the following:—

Most important of all has been the fact that an area of free land has continually lain on the western border of the settled area of the United States. Whenever social conditions tended to crystallize in the East, whenever capital tended to press upon labor or political restraints to impede the freedom of the mass, there was this gate of escape to the free conditions of the frontier. These free lands promoted individualism, economic equality, freedom to rise, democracy. Men would not accept inferior wages and a permanent position of social subordination when this promised land of freedom and equality was theirs for the taking. Who would rest content under oppressive legislative conditions when with a slight effort he might reach a land wherein to become a co-worker in the building of free cities and free States on the lines of his own ideal? In a word, then, free lands meant free opportunities. Their existence has differentiated the American democracy from the democracies which have preceded it, because ever, as democracy in the East took the form of highly specialized and complicated industrial society, in the West it kept in touch with primitive conditions,

and by action and reaction these two forces have shaped our history.

In the next place, these free lands and this treasury of industrial resources have existed over such vast spaces that they have demanded of democracy increasing spaciousness of design and power of execution. Western democracy is contrasted with the democracy of all other times in the largeness of the tasks to which it has set its hand, and in the vast achievements which it has wrought out in the control of nature and of politics. It would be difficult to over-emphasize the importance of this training upon democracy. Never before in the history of the world has a democracy existed on so vast an area and handled things in the gross with such success, with such largeness of design, and such grasp upon the means of execution. In short, democracy has learned in the West of the United States how to deal with the problem of magnitude. The old historic democracies were but little states with primitive economic conditions.

But the very task of dealing with vast resources, over vast areas, under the conditions of free competition furnished by the West, has produced the rise of those captains of industry whose success in consolidating economic power now raises the question as to whether democracy under such conditions can survive. For the old military type of Western leaders like George Rogers Clark, Andrew Jackson, and William Henry Harrison have been substituted such industrial leaders as James J. Hill, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie.

The question is imperative, then, What ideals persist from this democratic experience of the West; and have they acquired sufficient momentum to sustain themselves under conditions so radically unlike those in the days of their origin? In other words, the question put at the beginning of this discussion becomes pertinent. Under the forms of the American democracy is there in reality evolving such a concentration of economic and social power in the hands of a comparatively few men as

may make political democracy an appearance rather than a reality? The free lands are gone. The material forces that gave vitality to Western democracy are passing away. It is to the realm of the spirit, to the domain of ideals and legislation, that we must look for Western influence upon democracy in our own days.

Western democracy has been from the time of its birth idealistic. The very fact of the wilderness appealed to men as a fair, blank page on which to write a new chapter in the story of man's struggle for a higher type of society. The Western wilds, from the Alleghanies to the Pacific, constituted the richest free gift that was ever spread out before civilized man. To the peasant and artisan of the Old World, bound by the chains of social class, as old as custom and as inevitable as fate, the West offered an exit into a free life and greater well-being among the bounties of nature, into the midst of resources that demanded manly exertion, and that gave in return the chance for indefinite ascent in the scale of social advance. "To each she offered gifts after his will." Never again can such an opportunity come to the sons of men. It was unique, and the thing is so near us, so much a part of our lives, that we do not even yet comprehend its full significance. The existence of this land of opportunity has made America the goal of idealists from the days of the Pilgrim Fathers. With all the materialism of the pioneer movements, this idealistic conception of the vacant lands as an opportunity for a new order of things is unmistakably present. Kipling's "Song of the English" has given it expression:—

We were dreamers, dreaming greatly, in the man-stifled town;  
We yearned beyond the sky-line where the strange roads go down.  
Came the Whisper, came the Vision, came the Power with the Need,  
Till the Soul that is not man's soul was lent us to lead.  
As the deer breaks—as the steer breaks—from the herd where they  
graze,  
In the faith of little children we went on our ways.

Then the wood failed—then the food failed—then the last water dried—

In the faith of little children we lay down and died.

On the sand-drift—on the veldt-side—in the fern-scrub we lay,  
That our sons might follow after by the bones on the way.  
Follow after—follow after! We have watered the root  
And the bud has come to blossom that ripens for fruit!  
Follow after—we are waiting by the trials that we lost  
For the sound of many footsteps, for the tread of a host.

Follow after—follow after—for the harvest is sown:  
By the bones about the wayside ye shall come to your own!

This was the vision that called to Roger Williams,—that “prophetic soul ravished of truth disembodied,” “unable to enter into treaty with its environment,” and forced to seek the wilderness. “Oh, how sweet,” wrote William Penn, from his forest refuge, “is the quiet of these parts, freed from the troubles and perplexities of woeful Europe.” And here he projected what he called his “Holy Experiment in Government.”

If the later West offers few such striking illustrations of the relation of the wilderness to idealistic schemes, and if some of the designs were fantastic and abortive, none the less the influence is a fact. Hardly a Western State but has been the Mecca of some sect or band of social reformers, anxious to put into practice their ideals, in vacant land, far removed from the checks of a settled form of social organization. Consider the Dunkards, the Icarians, the Fourierists, the Mormons, and similar idealists who sought our Western wilds. But the idealistic influence is not limited to the dreamers’ conception of a new State. It gave to the pioneer farmer and city builder a restless energy, a quick capacity for judgment and action, a belief in liberty, freedom of opportunity, and a resistance to the domination of class which infused a vitality and power into the individual atoms of this democratic mass. Even as he dwelt among the stumps of his newly cut clearing, the pioneer had

the creative vision of a new order of society. In imagination he pushed back the forest boundary to the confines of a mighty Commonwealth; he willed that log cabins should become the lofty buildings of great cities. He decreed that his children should enter into a heritage of education, comfort, and social welfare, and for this ideal he bore the scars of the wilderness. Possessed with this idea he ennobled his task and laid deep foundations for a democratic State. Nor was this idealism by any means limited to the American pioneer.

To the old native democratic stock has been added a vast army of recruits from the Old World. There are in the Middle West alone four million persons of German parentage out of a total of seven millions in the country. Over a million persons of Scandinavian parentage live in the same region. The democracy of the newer West is deeply affected by the ideals brought by these immigrants from the Old World. To them America was not simply a new home; it was a land of opportunity, of freedom, of democracy. It meant to them, as to the American pioneer that preceded them, the opportunity to destroy the bonds of social caste that bound them in their older home, to hew out for themselves in a new country a destiny proportioned to the powers that God had given them, a chance to place their families under better conditions and to win a larger life than the life that they had left behind. He who believes that even the hordes of recent immigrants from southern Italy are drawn to these shores by nothing more than a dull and blind materialism has not penetrated into the heart of the problem. The idealism and expectation of these children of the Old World, the hopes which they have formed for a newer and freer life across the seas, are almost pathetic when one considers how far they are from the possibility of fruition. He who would take stock of American democracy must not forget the accumulation of human purposes and ideals which immigration has added to the American populace.

In this connection it must also be remembered that these

democratic ideals have existed at each stage of the advance of the frontier, and have left behind them deep and enduring effects on the thinking of the whole country. Long after the frontier period of a particular region of the United States has passed away, the conception of society, the ideals and aspirations which it produced, persist in the minds of the people. So recent has been the transition of the greater portion of the United States from frontier conditions to conditions of settled life, that we are, over the large portion of the United States, hardly a generation removed from the primitive conditions of the West. If, indeed, we ourselves were not pioneers, our fathers were, and the inherited ways of looking at things, the fundamental assumptions of the American people, have all been shaped by this experience of democracy on its westward march. This experience has been wrought into the very warp and woof of American thought.

Even those masters of industry and capital who have risen to power by the conquest of Western resources came from the midst of this society and still profess its principles. John D. Rockefeller was born on a New York farm, and began his career as a young business man in St. Louis. Marcus Hanna was a Cleveland grocer's clerk at the age of twenty. Claus Spreckles, the sugar king, came from Germany as a steerage passenger to the United States in 1848. Marshall Field was a farmer boy in Conway, Massachusetts, until he left to grow up with the young Chicago. Andrew Carnegie came as a ten-year-old boy from Scotland to Pittsburgh, then a distinctively Western town. He built up his fortunes through successive grades until he became the dominating factor in the great iron industries, and paved the way for that colossal achievement, the Steel Trust. Whatever may be the tendencies of this corporation, there can be little doubt of the democratic ideals of Mr. Carnegie himself. With lavish hand he has strewn millions through the United States for the promotion of libraries. The effect of this library movement in perpetuating the democracy that comes from an

intelligent and self-respecting people can hardly be measured. In his "Triumphant Democracy," published in 1886, Mr. Carnegie, the ironmaster, said, in reference to the mineral wealth of the United States: "Thank God, these treasures are in the hands of an intelligent people, the Democracy, to be used for the general good of the masses, and not made the spoils of monarchs, courts, and aristocracy, to be turned to the base and selfish ends of a privileged hereditary class." It would be hard to find a more rigorous assertion of democratic doctrine than the celebrated utterance, attributed to the same man, that he should feel it a disgrace to die rich.

In enumerating the services of American democracy, President Eliot included the corporation as one of its achievements, declaring that "freedom of incorporation, though no longer exclusively a democratic agency, has given a strong support to democratic institutions." In one sense this is doubtless true, since the corporation has been one of the means by which small properties can be aggregated into an effective working body. Socialistic writers have long been fond of pointing out also that these various concentrations pave the way for and make possible social control. From this point of view it is possible that the masters of industry may prove to be not so much an incipient aristocracy as the pathfinders for democracy in reducing the industrial world to systematic consolidation suited to democratic control. The great geniuses that have built up the modern industrial concentration were trained in the midst of democratic society. They were the product of these democratic conditions. Freedom to rise was the very condition of their existence. Whether they will be followed by successors who will adopt the exploitation of the masses, and who will be capable of retaining under efficient control these vast resources, is one of the questions which we shall have to face.

This, at least, is clear: American democracy is fundamentally the outcome of the experiences of the American people in dealing with the West. Western democracy through the whole of

its earlier period tended to the production of a society of which the most distinctive fact was the freedom of the individual to rise under conditions of social mobility, and whose ambition was the liberty and well-being of the masses. This conception has vitalized all American democracy, and has brought it into sharp contrasts with the democracies of history, and with those modern efforts of Europe to create an artificial democratic order by legislation. The problem of the United States is not to create democracy, but to conserve democratic institutions and ideals. In the later period of its development, Western democracy has been gaining experience in the problem of social control. It had steadily enlarged the sphere of its action and the instruments for its perpetuation. By its system of public schools, from the grades to the graduate work of the great universities, the West has created a larger single body of intelligent plain people than can be found elsewhere in the world. Its political tendencies, whether we consider Democracy, Populism, or Republicanism, are distinctly in the direction of greater social control and the conservation of the old democratic ideals.

To these ideals the West adheres with even a passionate determination. If, in working out its mastery of the resources of the interior, it has produced a type of industrial leader so powerful as to be the wonder of the world, nevertheless, it is still to be determined whether these men constitute a menace to democratic institutions, or the most efficient factor for adjusting democratic control to the new conditions.

Whatever shall be the outcome of the rush of this huge industrial modern United States to its place among the nations of the earth, the formation of its Western democracy will always remain one of the wonderful chapters in the history of the human race. Into this vast shaggy continent of ours poured the first feeble tide of European settlement. European men, institutions, and ideas were lodged in the American wilderness, and this great American West took them to her bosom, taught them a new way of looking upon the destiny of the common



man, trained them in adaptation to the conditions of the New World, to the creation of new institutions to meet new needs; and ever as society on her eastern border grew to resemble the Old World in its social forms and its industry, ever, as it began to lose faith in the ideals of democracy, she opened new provinces, and dowered new democracies in her most distant domains with her material treasures and with the ennobling influence that the fierce love of freedom, the strength that came from hewing out a home, making a school and a church, and creating a higher future for his family, furnished to the pioneer.

She gave to the world such types as the farmer Thomas Jefferson, with his Declaration of Independence, his statute for religious toleration, and his purchase of Louisiana. She gave us Andrew Jackson, that fierce Tennessee spirit who broke down the traditions of conservative rule, swept away the privacies and privileges of officialdom, and like a Gothic leader, opened the temple of the nation to the populace. She gave us Abraham Lincoln, whose gaunt frontier form and gnarled, massive hand told of the conflict with the forest, whose grasp of the ax-handle of the pioneer was no firmer than his grasp of the helm of the ship of state as it breasted the seas of civil war. She has furnished to this new democracy her stores of mineral wealth, that dwarf of those of the Old World, and her provinces that in themselves are vaster and more productive than most of the nations of Europe. Out of her bounty has come a nation whose industrial competition alarms the Old World, and the masters of whose resources wield wealth and power vaster than the wealth and power of kings. Best of all, the West gave, not only to the American, but to the unhappy and oppressed of all lands, a vision of hope, and assurance that the world held a place where were to be found high faith in man and the will and power to furnish him the opportunity to grow to the full measure of his own capacity. Great and powerful as are the new sons of her loins, the Republic is greater than

they. The paths of the pioneer have widened into broad highways. The forest clearing has expanded into affluent commonwealths. Let us see to it that the ideals of the pioneer in his log cabin shall enlarge into the spiritual life of a democracy where civic power shall dominate and utilize individual achievement for the common good.

#### COMMENT

In few other studies are the interpretation and evaluation of human experience as important as they are in history. Many of us do not realize this because we have not gone beyond the preliminary history courses which quickly survey the entire chronology of a nation or a continent. Because these courses deal so much with facts and leave the interpretations and evaluations to be taken up in later, more advanced courses, we sometimes think that history is little more than an accumulation of dates and names of kings and that historical writing is rather like the essay on Guy Fawkes extended indefinitely. Actually, the meaning and significance of national events and the careers of public figures, particularly as they affect the growth and character of a national, continental, or even hemispheric culture, are of much greater concern to modern historians than are, for example, their dates. Consequently, much historical writing occupies a medial area between the abstractions of philosophy and of many studies in the social sciences on the one hand, and the concrete literary representations of actual human experiences on the other. Within this area, the writing may point toward either pole: this essay, for example, tending toward the abstractions of philosophy, and that of Mumford, which follows, tending toward the concreteness of literature. Sometimes, as we shall see in "The Treachery of Pontiac," "Landfall," and similar essays gathered in the third section, historical writing moves out of the medial area all the way over into art—with both gains and losses to the work. In the close-up view required by the vital representations of art, the facts of history stand out with rare vividness and human interest, but the larger patterns—the meanings of the details, not just for the individuals involved,

but for whole generations or whole nations—may be obscured. Such meanings usually require the scope of a panoramic view and a simpler, more abstract treatment which may preclude many of the concrete details so essential to artistic representations.

To realize their purpose of interpreting and evaluating human experience, modern historians draw heavily upon many other studies, particularly economics, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, ethics, and aesthetics. Theorists, such as Marx, Hegel, Taine, Freud, Frazer, and Lovejoy, have deeply affected conceptions of history and techniques of historical research. For the historians' material—all of the experience of the race—is so vast that they need whatever help they can get in attempting to understand and appraise it. Their methods and points of view are now so various that no historian can tell us more than the little which he has managed to see from his own unique position. Gone are the days when it made little difference whose list of names and numbers we read: now we must go to several historians to get a rounded picture of any part of history, as, for example, we go to Frederick Jackson Turner and Lewis Mumford for different views of pioneers, the western frontier, and their effects upon our American culture.

Especially since 1900, Americans have been struggling to understand the character and meaning of their nation. Before this they tended to take their nationhood pretty much for granted except when quarrels over tariffs and slavery divided the nation into self-conscious sections or when a foreign power united the sections to protect their common interests in the Western hemisphere. As this essay makes clear, Americans had enough to do in clearing the wilderness and building up cities and huge industrial corporations without concerning themselves over the meaning of what they were doing. "Meaning" was confined to establishing one's independence and security or to making a fortune. Men did not need to know much about the possible consequences and significance of what they were doing to get along with each other, for anyone who did not fit the common pattern or who wanted something which the pattern did not allow could always establish a new pattern in the West. But when, as Turner points out, the frontier closed shortly before 1900 and men were confined by inelastic national boundaries, they had to begin thinking about how to get along together *as a nation*. The

new interest in nationhood was encouraged by the need to define the role of the United States in international affairs, a need which the Spanish-American War and the expansion of American industries into world markets made clear. In attempting a definition men had to ask what their country was and why. Turner was one of the first to see how much of the answer lay in the study of the economic and social forces behind the dates and names. In examining these forces he gave particular attention to those which came from sectionalism and the frontier.

This essay, which was first published in 1903, is a classic among modern historical studies of the origins and nature of American culture, and it deserves to be known by every American student. Its purpose, suggested by its title, is to uncover and appraise the contributions of the West to American democracy. Or, to put it more precisely, to prove that American democracy is fundamentally the outcome of the experiences of the American people in dealing with the West: to prove that "Western democracy through the whole of its earlier period tended to the production of a society of which the most distinctive fact was the freedom of the individual to rise under conditions of social mobility, and whose ambition was the liberty and well-being of the masses. . . ." and that "This conception has vitalized all American democracy."

The ideas are arranged in a simple order appropriate to the inductive reasoning which dominates the organization of the essay as a whole. The principal ones are backed up with many illustrations and with a deliberately lofty and fulsome tone which apparently is intended to give them an impressive grandeur and solemnity. However, the purpose of the essay is a large one which invites abstract treatment in very broad terms. The clarity and persuasiveness of some of the illustrations are betrayed by the vagueness and sentimentality of some of the huge personifications: the "great American West" as a large-bosomed woman with a fierce mother-love (an effort to induce a stock response to the mother image), or Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri as a "sisterhood" (a suggestion of the dewy innocence, applecheeked vitality, and sacrosanct purity of a family of adolescent girls—a thing to be vaguely loved and approved). These tend to distract us from the central points without adding anything to our understanding of the concrete, specific situations to

which the points refer. The distraction becomes worse when the attempt is made to express a rather undefined enthusiasm in swollen clichés: "She gave us Abraham Linclon, whose gaunt frontier form and gnarled, massive hand told of the conflict of the forest, whose grasp of the ax-handle of the pioneer was no firmer than his grasp of the helm of the ship of state as it breasted the seas of civil war." (One almost expects a Fourth of July brass band to pick up the beat of that sentence and go roaring off into a cardboard sunrise labelled "Our Glorious Future.")

We find it a little hard to give all our confidence to an interpretation presented in such emotionally charged but indefinite language. We may wonder if it is not the same uncritical habit of thought exhibited in the use of big, handsome, but slightly frayed metaphors ("the helm of the ship of state") which enables the essay to skip rather lightly over the hideous facts of the slum areas of the times and to withhold final judgment of the great trustbuilders (even though there are hints that their activities may not have been entirely beneficial). In its interpretations, the essay does not sufficiently distinguish between political individualism and economic individualism—almost as if Turner so cherished the first that he was reluctant to speak out against the second, lest his words be misconstrued as an attack on personal liberty. On this point the essay "The Romanticism of the Pioneer," which treats much of the same subject matter with a different purpose, is more clear and penetrating. Yet Turner's essay, for all its faults, realizes its own purpose, and because many of its generalizations are still valid, students of American culture have been able to use them to go forward to yet more precise interpretations and more discriminating evaluations.

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## The Romanticism of the Pioneer

LEWIS MUMFORD

THE PIONEER has usually been looked upon as a typical product of the American environment; but the truth is that he existed in the European mind before he made his appearance here. Pioneering may in part be described as the Romantic movement in action. If one wishes to fathom the pioneer's peculiar behavior, one must not merely study his relations with the Indians, with the trading companies, and with the government's land policies: one must also understand the main currents of European thought in the Eighteenth Century. In the episode of pioneering, a new system of ideas wedded itself to a new set of experiences: the experiences were American, but the ideas themselves had been nurtured in Savoy, in the English lake country, and on the Scots moors. Passing into action, these ideas became queerly transmogrified, so that it now takes more than a little digging to see the relation between Chateaubriand and Mark Twain, or Rousseau and William James. The pioneer arose out of an external opportunity, an unopened continent, and out of an inward necessity. It is the inward necessity that most of our commentators upon him have neglected.

In the Eighteenth Century, Europe became at last conscious

of the fact that the living sources of its older culture had dried up; and it made its first attempt to find a basis for a new culture. Many of its old institutions were already hollow and rotten. The guilds had become nests of obsolete privileges, which stood doggedly in the way of any technical improvement. The church, in England and in France, had become an institution for providing support to the higher ranks of the clergy, who believed only in the mundane qualities of bread and wine. In fact, all the remains of medieval Europe were in a state of pitiable decay; they were like venerable apple-trees, burgeoned with suckers and incapable of bearing fruit. A mere wind would have been enough to send the old structure toppling; instead of it, a veritable tempest arose, and by the time Voltaire had finished with the Church, Montesquieu and Rousseau with the State, Turgot and Adam Smith with the old corporations, there was scarcely anything left that an intelligent man of the Eighteenth Century would have cared to carry away. Once the old shelters and landmarks were gone, where could people turn? The classic past had already been tried, and had been found—dull. Medievalism was not yet quite dead enough to be revived; *chinoiseries* were merely amusing. There remained one great and permanent source of culture, and with a hundred different gestures the Eighteenth Century acclaimed it—Nature.

The return to Nature occurred at the very climax of an arranged and artificial existence: trees had been clipped, hedges had been deformed, architecture had become as cold and finicking as a pastrycook's icing, the very hair of the human head had been exchanged for the white wig of senility. Precisely at this moment, when a purely urbane convention seemed established forever, a grand retreat began. In the Middle Ages such a retreat would have led to the monastery: it now pushed back to the country, by valiant mountain paths, like Rousseau's, or by mincing little country lanes, like that which led Marie Antoinette to build an English village in Versailles, and play at

being a milkmaid. Nature was the fashion: "every one did it." If one had resources, one laid out a landscape park, wild like the fells of Yorkshire, picturesque like the hills of Cumberland, the whole atmosphere heightened by an artificial ruin, to show dramatically the dominance of Nature over man's puny handiwork. If one were middle class, one built a villa, called *Idle Hour*, or *The Hermitage*; at the very least, one took country walks, or dreamed of a superb adventurous manhood in America.

In the mind of the great leader of this movement, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Nature was not a fresh element in the tissue of European culture: it was a complete substitute for the existing institutions, conventions, habits, and histories. Rousseau began his career with an essay on the question whether the restoration of the arts and sciences had the effect of purifying or corrupting public morals: he won the prize offered by the academy at Dijon by affirming their tendency to corrupt; and from that time onward (1750) he continued to write, with better sense but with hardly any decrease in his turbulent conviction, upon the worthlessness of contemporary civilization in Europe. His prescription was simple: return to Nature: shun society: enjoy solitude. Rousseau's Nature was not Newton's Nature—a system of matter and motion, ordered by Providence, and established in the human mind by nice mathematical calculations. By Nature Rousseau meant the mountains, like those which shoulder across the background of his birthplace; he meant the mantle of vegetation, where one might botanize, and see "eternity in a grain of sand, and heaven in a wild flower;" he meant the fields, like those of Savoy, where a simple peasantry practiced the elementary routine of living.

The return to Nature, in Rousseau's sense, was not a new injunction; nor was it an unsound one. As an aid to recovery in physical illness and neurosis, its value was recognized at least as early as Hippocrates, and as a general social formula it has played a part in the life and literature of every finished civili-



zation. The Georgics, the Bucolics, and the idylls of classic culture belong to its sophisticated moments: after the formalities of the Confucian period Lao-tse's philosophy developed a similar creed and persuaded its individualistic adherents to renounce the sterile practices of the court and the bureaucracy and bury themselves in the Bamboo Grove. Nature almost inevitably becomes dominant in the mind when the powers of man himself to mold his fortunes and make over his institutions seem feeble—when, in order to exist at all, it is necessary to accept the wilderness of Nature and human passion as "given," without trying to subdue its disorder.

What made the authority of Rousseau's doctrine so immense, what made it play such a presiding part in European life, echoing through the minds of Goethe, Herder, Kant, Wordsworth, and even, quite innocently, Blake, was the fact that there awaited the European in America a Nature that was primitive and undefiled. In the purely mythical continent that uprose in the European mind, the landscape was untainted by human blood and tears, and the Red Indian, like Atala, led a life of physical dignity and spiritual austerity: the great Sachem was an aborigine with the stoic virtues of a Marcus Aurelius. Rousseau's glorification of peasant life was after all subject to scrutiny, and by the time the French Revolution came, the peasant had a word or two to say about it himself; but the true child of Nature in the New World, uncorrupted by the superstitions of the Church, could be idealized to the heart's content: his customs could be attributed to the unhindered spontaneity of human nature, his painfully acquired and transmitted knowledge might be laid to instinctive processes; in short, he became a pure ideal. Even William Blake could dream of liberty on the banks of the Ohio, if not on the banks of the Thames.

In America, if society was futile, one had only to walk half a day to escape it; in Europe, if one walked half a day one would be in the midst of another society. In Europe one had to *plan* a retreat: in America one simply encountered it.

If Nature was, as Wordsworth said, a world of ready wealth, blessing our minds and hearts with wisdom and health and cheerfulness, what place could be richer than America? Once Romanticism turned its eyes across the ocean, it became a movement indeed. It abandoned culture to return to Nature; it left a skeleton of the past for an embryo of the future; it renounced its hoarded capital and began to live on its current income; it forfeited the old and the tried for the new and the experimental. This transformation was, as Nietzsche said, an immense physiological process, and its result was "the slow emergence of an essentially super-national and nomadic species of man, who possesses, physiologically speaking, a maximum of the art and power of adaptation as his typical distinction."

The Romantic Movement was thus the great formative influence which produced not merely the myth of pioneering, but the pioneer. But it was not the sole influence upon the scene. Human society was divided in the Eighteenth Century between those who thought it perfectible, and those who thought that the existing institutions were all essentially rotten: the Benthamites and the Turgots were on one side, the Rousseaus and Blakes on the other, and the great mass of people mixed these two incompatible doctrines in varying proportions. The perfectionists believed in progress, science, laws, education, and comfort; progress was the mode and comfort the end of every civil arrangement. The followers of Rousseau believed in none of these things. Instead of sense, they wanted sensibility; instead of education, spontaneity; instead of smokeless chimneys and glass windows and powerlooms, a clear sky and an open field.

If the pioneer was the lawfully begotten child of the Romantic Movement, he belonged to the other school by adoption. He wanted Nature; and he wanted comfort no less. He sought to escape the conventions of society; yet his notion of a free government was one that devoted itself to a perpetual process of legislation, and he made no bones about appealing to the

Central Government when he wanted inland waterways and roads and help in exterminating the Indian. Society was effete: its machinery could be perfected—the pioneer accepted both these notions. He believed with Rousseau that “man is good naturally, and that by institutions only is he made bad.” And if the Yankees who first settled in Illinois were looked upon as full of “notions” because they were wont to take thought for the morrow and to multiply mechanical devices, these habits, too, were quickly absorbed. As Nature grew empty, progress took its place in the mind of the pioneer. Each of these ideas turned him from the past, and enabled him to speculate, in both the commercial and philosophic senses of the word, on the future.

## ii

In America the return to Nature set in before there was any physical necessity for filling up the raw lands of the West. The movement across the Alleghanies began long before the East was fully occupied: it surged up in the third quarter of the Eighteenth Century, after the preliminary scouting and road-building by the Ohio Company, and by the time the Nineteenth Century was under way, the conquest of the Continent had become the obsession of every progressive American community.

This westward expansion of the pioneer was, without doubt, furthered by immediate causes, such as the migration of disbanded soldiers after the Revolution, endowed with land-warrants; but from the beginning, the movement was compulsive and almost neurotic; and as early as 1837 Peck's *New Guide to the West* recorded that “migration has become almost a habit.” External matters of fact would perhaps account for the New England migration to Ohio: they cease to be relevant, however, when they are called upon to explain the succession of jumps which caused so many settlers to pull up stakes and move into Illinois—and then into Missouri—and so be-

yond, until finally the Pacific Coast brought the movement temporarily to an end. This restless search was something more than a prospecting of resources; it was an experimental investigation of Nature, Solitude, The Primitive Life; and at no stage of the journey, however much the story may be obscured by land-booms and Indian massacres and gold rushes, did these things drop out of the pioneer's mind. Charles Fenno Hoffmann in *A Winter in the West* (1835), was only echoing the unconscious justification of the pioneer when he exclaimed: "What is the echo of roofs that a few centuries since rung with barbaric revels, or of aisles that pealed the anthems of painted pomp, to the silence which has reigned in these dim groves since the first fiat of Creation was spoken?"

Mark the difference between this movement and that which first planted the colonists of Massachusetts or Pennsylvania in the New World. In the first period of the seaboard settlement, America was a place where the European could remain more nearly his proper self, and keep up the religious practices which were threatened by economic innovations and political infringements in Europe. The Puritans, the Moravians, the Dunkers, the Quakers, the Catholics, sought America as a refuge in which they could preserve in greater security what they dearly valued in Europe. But with the drift to the West, America became, on the contrary, a place where the European could be swiftly transformed into something different: where the civil man could become a hardy savage, where the social man could become an "individual," where the settled man could become a nomad, and the family man could forget his old connections. With pioneering, America ceased to be an outpost of Europe. The Western communities relapsed into an earlier and more primitive type of occupation; they reverted to the crude practices of the hunter, the woodman, and the miner. Given the occasion and the environment, these were necessary occupations; the point to be noted, however, is that, uninfluenced by peasant habits or the ideas of an old culture, the work of the

miner, woodman, and hunter led to unmitigated destruction and pillage. What happened was just the reverse of the old barbarian invasions, which turned the Goths and the Vandals into Romans. The movement into backwoods America turned the European into a barbarian.

The grisly process of this settlement was described by Crèvecoeur and Cooper long before Professor Turner summed them up in his classic treatise on the passing of the frontier. "In all societies," says Crèvecoeur, "there are off-casts; this impure part serves as our precursors or pioneers. . . . By living in or near the woods, their actions are regulated by the neighborhood. The deer often come to eat their grain, the wolves to destroy their sheep, the bears to kill their hogs, the foxes to catch their poultry. The surrounding hostility immediately puts the gun into their hands; they watch these animals; they kill some; and thus, by defending their property, they soon become professed hunters; this is the progress; once hunters, farewell to the plow. The chase renders them ferocious, gloomy, unsociable; a hunter wants no neighbors, he rather hates them because he dreads competition."

Equipped with his ax and his rifle, the two principal weapons of the pioneer, he carried on his warfare against Nature, cutting down the forest and slaughtering its living creatures. Instead of seeking Nature in a wise passiveness, as Wordsworth urged, he raped his new mistress in a blind fury of obstreperous passion. No one who has read *The Pioneers* can forget Cooper's account of the sickening massacre of wild pigeons, carried on long after the need for food had been satisfied. In these practices, the ordinary farmer and tradesman of the old country went back to a phase of European experience which had lingered on chiefly in the archaic hunts of a predatory aristocracy; and in the absence of any restraints or diversions, these primitive practices sank more deeply into the grain.

The apology for this behavior was based upon the noblest grounds; one can scarcely pick up a contemporary description

of the pioneering period without finding a flowery account of the new life, put in contrast to wretched, despotic, foolishly beautiful Europe; and this animus was echoed even in the comments that Hawthorne and Emerson, to say nothing of such a real pioneer as Mark Twain, made upon the institutions of the Old World. Let me put the contemporary apology and criticism side by side. The first is from a pamphlet by George Lunt called *Three Eras of New England* (1857):

"Whenever this is the state of man the impertinent fictions and sophisms of life die out. The borrowings and lendings of the human creature fall away from him under the rigid discipline of primeval necessities, as the encrusting dirt, which bedimmed the diamond, is removed by the hard process which reveals and confirms its inestimable price. The voice of the mountain winds would mock at the most indispensable and best recognized trappings of polished society as they rent them away and fastened them fluttering in the crevices of a cliff, or bore them onwards to the unknown wilderness, and would hail its very discomforts with the shout and laughter of derision. . . . So far, therefore, as our familiar and inherent characteristics, which form the foundation of our nature, and make us good and make us great, are liable to become diluted or perverted by the sophistications of social being, they may require an actual refreshment and renewal, under the severe and inevitable trials of colonial existence. . . . This, then, is the absolute law of all legitimate migration, that it leaves behind it the weaknesses, the concretions and superfluities of artificial life, and founds its new existence upon an appeal to the primordial elements of natural society."

Against this apology for the deprivations of the pioneer life, let me set the comment of a young English settler named Fordham, who had come face to face with the untrammelled Children of Nature; this passage occurs on the page after that in which he records the amiable slaughter of six Indians, men and women, on English Prairie, in the spring of 1817:

"Instead of being more virtuous, as he is less refined, I am inclined to think that man's virtues are like the fruits of the earth, only excellent when subjected to culture. The force of the simile you will never feel, until you ride in these woods over wild strawberries, which dye your horses' fetlocks like blood, yet are insipid in flavour; till you have seen wagon-loads of grapes, choked by the brambles and the poisonous vine; till you find peaches, tasteless as a turnip, and roses throwing their leaves of every shade upon the wind, with scarcely a scent upon them. 'Tis the hand of man that makes the wilderness shine."

The hand of man was of course busy, and here and there, particularly in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, villages and cities grew up which carried on, for a generation or so in the Nineteenth Century, the tradition that the seaboard knew in an earlier day; but like a river that, rushing onwards, deposits its heaviest burdens first, the best people and the soundest traditions tended to be deposited in the tracts that adjoined the original colonies, and as the stream moved further west, the traditions of a civil life disappeared, and the proportion of scalawags, cut-throats, bruisers, bullies, and gamblers tended to increase, and the wilderness got the upper hand. There are plenty of exceptions to this generalization, it goes without saying; but Texas and Nevada were the poles towards which pioneer effort tended to run. The original process has been obscured in many places by a second and third wave of agriculturists: but it is not hard to get below the surface and see what the original reality was.

iii

The shock of the pioneer's experience left its mark in one or two gestures of anticipation, and in an aftermath of regretful reminiscence. The post-Civil War writers who deal with *Roughing It*, *A Son of the Middle Border*, or *A Hoosier Schoolmaster*, to mention only a few examples, had already

abandoned the scene of the pioneer's efforts and had returned to the East: they made copy of their early life, but, though they might be inclined to sigh after it, because it was associated with their youth, they had only a sentimental notion of continuing it. For them, the pioneering experience could be recapitulated in a night around a camp-fire or a visit to the Wild West Show, which the astute Barnum had introduced to the denizens of New York in a day when the West was still in fact wild. A genuine culture and a relevant way of life do not lose their significance so easily; and the thin-skinnedness of the pioneer in the face of criticism, and the eagerness of the post-pioneer generation—The Inheritors of Susan Glaspell's play—to identify themselves with the culture of the past, shows, I think, that at bottom the pioneer realized that his efforts had gone awry.

One is faced by the paradox that the formative elements in the pioneer's career expressed themselves in literature almost at the very outset of the movement, in the works of men who were in fact almost as aloof from the realities of the western exodus as Chateaubriand himself; and although the pioneer types and the pioneer adventures have been repeated in literature of the rubber-stamp pattern from Gustav Aimard to Zane Gray, what was valid and what was peculiar in the pioneer regime was embodied, once for all, by James Fenimore Cooper. These new contacts, these new scenes, these adventures, served to create just three genuine folk-heroes. In these heroes, the habits of the pioneer were raised to the plane of a pattern.

Cooper's Leatherstocking was the new *Natur-Mensch*, established on a platform of simple human dignity. He was versed in the art of the woods, with the training of the aborigine himself; he shared the reticence and shyness that the Amerind perhaps showed in the company of strangers; and above the tender heart he exhibited mutely in *The Deerslayer*, he disclosed a leathery imperturbability. His eye was unerring; and it was only in instinct that Chingachgook, the Indian,



sometimes surpassed this great hunter and warrior. Leatherstocking's bullet, which drives the bullet that has already hit the bull's eye still deeper into the target is, of course, no ordinary bullet: it shared the inevitable enlargement of the hero's powers. Not every pioneer, needless to say, was a Natty Bumppo; but the shy, reserved, taciturn, dryly humorous hunter was the sort of being the pioneer tended, under the first stress of his new association, to become. Cooper himself painted other pioneer types, the sullen squatter, Ishmael, the fur trader, the frontier soldier, the woodman, the bee-hunter; but the fact that he had already outlined the character of Leatherstocking in the equally shrewd and reserved Spy of the Neutral Ground, Harvey Birch, showed, I believe, that this figure had become a property of his unconscious.

First a hunter, then a scout, then a trapper, Leatherstocking encompassed the chief pioneering experiences; it required a generation or two before the trader became the boomtown manufacturer, and the manufacturer the realtor and financier, dealing only with the tokens of industry. Like the first pioneers, Leatherstocking fled before the smoke of the settler's domestic fire, as before the prairie fire itself. With all the shoddiness of Cooper's imaginative constructions, he was plainly seized by a great character: his novels live solely through their central conception of Leatherstocking. The hard man, a Sir Giles Overreach, or the cunning man, Ulysses, had been portrayed before in literature; but the hardness and craft of Leatherstocking brought forth a new quality, which came directly from the woods and the prairies. When the pioneer called his first political hero Old Hickory he poetically expressed this new truth of character: barbarians or outlaws they might be, these pioneers, but their heroes grew straight. This straightness is the great quality one feels in Lincoln. It was as if, after centuries of clipping and pruning, we had at last allowed a tree to grow to its full height, shaped only by snow, rain, sun, wind, frost. A too timid and complacent culture may sacrifice the inner

strength to an agreeable conformity to a common mold, a little undersized. These Old Hickories, on the other hand, grew a little scraggly and awkward; but in their reach, one would catch, occasionally, a hint of the innate possibilities of the species.

In the course of the Nineteenth Century, Leatherstocking was joined by an even more authentic folk hero, Paul Bunyan, whose gigantic shape, partly perhaps derived from Gargantua through his French-Canadian forebears, took form over the fire in the logger's shack. Paul Bunyan, properly enough, was an axman; and, as if to complete the symbolism and identify himself more completely with the prime activities of the new American type, he was also a great inventor. He figures on a continental scale. All his prowess and strength is based upon the notion that a thing becomes a hundred times as important if it is a hundred times as big. The habit of counting and "calculating" and "figuring" and "reckoning" and "guessing"—the habit, that is, of exchanging quality for number—is expressed in nearly all of Bunyan's exploits. In a day when no one dared point to the string of shacks that formed the frontier town as a proof of the qualitative beauties and delights of a pioneer community, the popular imagination took refuge in a statistical criterion of value: they counted heads: they counted money: they counted miles: they counted anything that lent itself to large figures.

This habit grew to such an extent that people began to appreciate its comic quality; in the Bunyan tales it is a device of humor as well as of heroic exaggeration. For many years, as the legend was quietly growing and expanding, Paul Bunyan lurked under the surface of our life: we lived by his light, even if we were ignorant of his legend. He, too, like Leatherstocking, was aloof from women; and this fact is not without significance; for with the woman the rough bachelor life must come to an end, and though the pioneer might carry his family with him, bedstead, baby, and all, they were sooner or later bound to

domesticate him, and make him settle down. Woman was the chief enemy of the pioneer: she courageously rose to the burdens of the new life, and demanded her place side by side in the legislature: but in the end she had her revenge, in temperance clubs, in anti-vice societies, or in the general tarnation tidiness of Tom Sawyer's aunt. When Whitman sang of the Perfect Comrade, he did not at first think of woman: so far from indicating a special sexual anomaly in Whitman, it is rather a tribute to his imaginative identification with the collective experience of his generation.

At the same time, another folk-hero arose in literature, at first sight an incomprehensible one. He was neither heroic, nor, on the surface, a pioneer; and the story that brought him forth was a rather commonplace fantasy of an earlier day. Yet the history of Rip Van Winkle shows that he has had a deep hold on the American mind: Irving's tale itself remains a popular legend, and the play that was written about him as early as the eighteen-thirties was remodeled by succeeding generations of American actors, until given its classic form by Joseph Jefferson. How did this happen? The reason, I think, was that Rip's adventures and disappointments stood for that of the typical American of the pioneer period. Inept at consecutive work, harried by his wife, and disgusted with human society, he retires to the hills with his dog and his gun. He drinks heavily, falls asleep, and becomes enchanted. At the end of twenty years he awakes to find himself in a different society. The old landmarks have gone; the old faces have disappeared; all the outward aspects of life have changed. At the bottom, however, Rip himself has not changed; for he has been drunk and lost in a dream, and for all that the calendar and the clock records, he remains, mentally, a boy.

There was the fate of a whole generation: indeed, is it not still the fate of perhaps the great majority of Americans, lost in their dreams of a great fortune in real-estate, rubber, or oil? In our heroic moments, we may think of ourselves as Leather-

stockings, or two-fisted fellows like Paul Bunyan; but in the bottom of our hearts, we are disconsolate Rips. In this process of uneasy transition, in the endless experimentalism and externality of the American scheme, the American came to feel that something was wrong. He saw no way of rectifying the fact itself; the necessity to be "up and moving" seemed written in the skies. In his disappointment and frustration, he became maudlin. It is no accident that our most sentimental popular songs all date back to the earlier half of the Nineteenth Century. At the moment when the eagle screamed loudest, when the words Manifest Destiny were put into circulation, when Colonel Diver, the fire-eater, Jefferson Brick, the editor of the Rowdy Journal, and Scadder, the real-estate gambler, were joining voices in a Hallelujah of triumph,—it was then that the tear of regret and the melancholy clutch of the Adam's apple made their way into the ballad.

The great song of the mid-century was "Don't you remember Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?" but the truth is that Alice was merely a name to start the tears rolling. It was not over the fate of Alice that the manly heart grieved: what hurt was the fact that in the short space of twenty years, the mill-wheel had fallen to pieces, the rafters had tumbled in, the cabin had gone to ruin, the tree had been felled, and "where once the lord of the forest waved" were grass and golden grain. In short, ruin and change lay in the wake of the pioneer, as he went westering. "There is change in the things I loved, Ben Bolt, they have changed from the old to the new," and somehow this progressive generation had an uneasy suspicion that they were not changing altogether for the better. What a conflict was in the pioneer's bosom! He pulls up stakes, to the tune of Home Sweet Home. He sells his parcel of real estate to the next gambler who will hold it, still sighing "there is no place like home." He guts out the forest: "Woodman, spare that tree, touch not a single bough, in youth it sheltered me, and I'll protect it now." And in the struggle of scalping one of the

Red Varmints he is driving to the Land of the Sunset the Song of Hiawatha slips from his hip-pocket.

Does this seem to exaggerate the conflict? Be assured that it was there. The Mark Twains, Bret Hartes, and Artemus Wards would not have found the old solidities of Europe so ingratiating, taught as they were to despise Europe's cities and institutions as the relics of a miserable and feudal past, if the life they had known had not too often starved their essential humanity.

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With the experience of the Great War behind us, we can now understand a little better the psychal state of our various American communities, whilst they were immersed in their besetting "war against Nature." A war automatically either draws people into the service, or, if they resist, unfits them for carrying on their civil duties in a whole-hearted manner. In the pioneer's war against Nature, every member of the community was bound to take part, or be branded as a dilettante, a skulker, a deserter. The phrases that were used in justification of pioneering during the Nineteenth Century were not those which set the Romantic Movement in action in the Eighteenth: these newcomers sought to "conquer a wilderness," "subdue Nature," "take possession of the continent." "To act that each to-morrow finds us *farther* than to-day," was the very breath of the new pioneer mores: the Psalm of Life was the sum of the pioneer's life.

The throb and urge of this grand march across the continent communicated itself to those who remained in the East. The non-combatants in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York were as uneasy and hesitating in their activities as a conscript who expects at any moment to be called to the colors. Some of them, like C. F. Adams, were only too happy when the Civil War turned the call of the pioneer into a command; others, like William Perkins Marsh confessed that "in our place and day

the scholar hath no vocation," and made plain with what reluctance they turned their backs upon science and the humane arts to struggle in the world of business; others, like William Cullen Bryant, threw a handful of Nature poems into the scales, to weigh over against a life of zealous energy in newspaperdom. In these, and many other equally irritating biographies, one finds that the myth of the Pioneer Conquest had taken possession of even the finer and more sensitive minds: they accepted the uglinesses and brutalities of pioneering even as many of our contemporaries accepted the bestialities of war, and instead of recognizing no other necessity than their best desires, they throttled their desires and bowed to an imaginary necessity. In the end, the pioneer was as far from Rousseau and Wordsworth as the inventor of poison gas was from the troubadour who sang the Song of Roland.

The effect of the pioneer habits upon our culture has become a commonplace of literary criticism during the last half-generation; the weakness of this criticism has been the failure to grasp the difference in origin between the puritan, the pioneer, and the inventor-businessman. The Puritan did indeed pave the way for the extroverts that came after him; but what he really sought was an inner grace. The pioneer debased all the old values of a settled culture, and made the path of a dehumanized industrialism in America as smooth as a concrete road; but it was only in the habits he had developed, so to say, on the road, that he turned aside from the proper goal of the Romantic Movement, which was to find a basis for a fresh effort in culture, and gave himself over to the inventor-businessman's search for power. All three, Puritan, pioneer, and businessman came to exist through the breakdown of Europe's earlier, integrated culture; but, given the wide elbow room of America, each type tended to develop to its extreme, only to emerge in succeeding generations into the composite character of that fictitious person, the Average American.

In order to appreciate the distance between the America of

the Eighteenth Century, which was still attached umbilically to the older Europe, and the America of the pioneer, tintured by the puritan and the industrialist, one might perhaps compare two representative men, Thomas Jefferson and Mark Twain. When Mark Twain went to Europe during the Gilded Age, he was really an innocent abroad: his experience in *Roughing It* had not fitted him for any sort of seasoned contact with climates, councils, governments. When Jefferson went to Paris from the backwoods of Virginia, a hundred years earlier, he was a cultivated man, walking among his peers: he criticized English architecture, not as Mark Twain might have done, because it was effete and feudal, but because it was even more barbarous than that of the American provinces. To Mark Twain, as to most of his contemporaries, industry appeared in the light of what sporting people call a good thing; when, after sinking a small fortune in a new typesetting machine, he approached his friend H. H. Rogers with another invention, the chief attraction he emphasized was its potential monopoly. Jefferson's concern with the practical arts, on the other hand, was personal and esthetic: he was an active farmer, with a carefully kept nursery book, and he brought back to America prints and measurements of public buildings, which served him in the design of his own.

The death of Jefferson, the scholar, the artist, the statesman, and agriculturist—one of the last true figures of the Renaissance—was symbolic; for it came in 1826, just at the moment when the great westward expansion began. In two men of the following generation, S. F. B. Morse and Edgar Allen Poe, we find the new pioneer mores working towards their two legitimate goals. Morse defended his preoccupation with criticism, instead of painting, in words that might have been framed as an illustration of the mood I have been trying to describe. "If I am to be the Pioneer, and am fitted for it, why should I not glory as much in felling trees and clearing away rubbish as in showing the decorations suited to a more advanced state of

culture?" As for Poe, the Walpole of a belated Gothic revival, he recorded in literature the displacement and dissociation that was taking place in the community's life.

With no conscious connection with the life about him, Poe became nevertheless the literary equivalent of the industrialist and the pioneer. I have no desire to speak lightly of Poe's capacities as a critic of literature, which were high, nor of his skill in the formal exercises of literary composition. Poe was the first artist consciously to give the short-story a succinct and final form; and as an esthetic experimentalist his own arrangements in prose prepared the way, among other things, for Baudelaire's prose poems. Yet Poe's meticulous and rationalistic mind fitted his environment and mirrored its inner characteristics far more readily than a superficial look at it would lead one to believe. In him, the springs of human desire had not so much frozen up as turned to metal: his world was, in one of his favorite words, plutonian, like that of Watt and Fulton and Gradgrind: the tears that he dropped were steel beads, and his mind worked like a mechanical hopper, even when there were no appropriate materials to throw into it. It happened to be a very good mind; and when it had something valuable to work upon, as in literary criticism, the results were often excellent. Left to himself, however, he either spent his energies on small ingenuities like ciphers and "scientific" puzzles, or he created a synthetic world, half-pasteboard and half-perfume, whose thinness as an imaginative reality was equaled only by its apparent dissociation from the actualities that surrounded him. The criticism of Poe's fantasies is not that they were "unreal": Shakespeare's are equally so: the criticism is that they have their sources in a starved and limited humanity, the same starved and limited humanity in which Gradgrind devoted himself to "hard facts," and the frontier fighter to cold steel. Terror and cruelty dominated Poe's mind; and terror and cruelty leave a scar on almost every tale and anecdote about pioneer life.



The emotional equivalence of Poe's fiction and the pioneer's fact was perhaps a matter of chance; I will not strain my point by trying to make out a case for anything else. That the equivalence is not a meretricious presumption on my part, is attested, I think, by the fact that it was corroborated a generation later in the anecdotes of Mark Twain and the short stories of Ambrose Bierce. No sensitive mind can undergo warfare or pioneering, with all the raw savagery of human nature developed to the full, without undergoing a shock. The massacres, the banditries, even the coarse practical jokes, all left their detestable impressions. There is a mock-sinister side to the Romantic Movement in European literature in the horror stories of Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe; but these stories are mere pap for infants alongside those Mark Twain was able to recount in almost every chapter of *Roughing It* and *Life on the Mississippi*.

Poe, perhaps, had never heard one of these stories; but the dehumanized world he created gave a place for terrors, cruelties, and murders which expressed, in a sublimated and eminently readable form, the sadisms and masochisms of the pioneer's life. Man is, after all, a domestic animal; and though he may return to unbroken nature as a relief from all the sobrieties of existence, he can reside for long in the wilderness only by losing some of the essential qualities of the cultivated human species. Poe had lost these qualities, neurotically, without even seeing the wilderness. Cooper's generation had dreamed of *Leatherstocking*; in realization, the dream had become the nightmare world of Poe. There is scarcely a page of reliable testimony about pioneer life which does not hint at this nightmare. The testimony is all the more salient when one finds Mark Twain reciting his horrors in a vein of pure innocence, without a word of criticism, and then, by a psychic transfer, becoming ferociously indignant over the same things when he finds them in his imaginary Court of King Arthur.

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The vast gap between the hope of the Romantic Movement and the reality of the pioneer period is one of the most sardonic jests of history. On one side, the bucolic innocence of the Eighteenth Century, its belief in a fresh start, and its attempt to achieve a new culture. And over against it, the epic march of the covered wagon, leaving behind it deserted villages, bleak cities, depleted soils, and the sick and exhausted souls that engraved their epitaphs in Mr. Masters' Spoon River Anthology. Against the genuine heroism and derring-do that accompanied this movement, and against the real gains that it achieved here and there in the spread of social well-being, must be set off the crudities of the pioneer's sexual life, his bestial swilling and drinking and bullying, and his barbarities in dealing with the original inhabitants—"a fierce dull biped standing in our way." The gun and the ax and the pick, alas! had taught their lessons only too well; and the more social and coöperative groups, like the Mormons, were attacked violently, but always under the cover of high moral indignation, by belligerent worthies whose morals would have given a bad odor to a hangman's picnic.

The truth is that the life of the pioneer was bare and insufficient: he did not really face Nature, he merely evaded society. Divorced from its social context, his experience became meaningless. That is why, perhaps, he kept on changing his occupation and his habitat, for as long as he could keep on moving he could forget that, in his own phrase, he was not "getting anywhere." He had no end of experiences: he could shoot, build, plant, chop, saw, dicker: he was Ulysses, Nimrod, Noah, and Cain all bundled into one man. But there was, all too literally, no end to these activities—that is, no opportunity to refine them, to separate the ore from the slag, to live them over again in the mind. In short, the pioneer experience

did not produce a rounded pioneer culture; and if the new settler began as an unconscious follower of Rousseau, he was only too ready, after the first flush of effort, to barter all his glorious heritage for gas light and paved streets and starched collars and skyscrapers and the other insignia of a truly high and progressive civilization. The return to Nature led, ironically, to a denatured environment, and when, after the long journey was over, the pioneer became conscious once more of the social obligation, these interests manifested themselves in covert pathological ways, like campaigns to prohibit the cigarette or to prescribe the length of sheets for hotel beds, or to promote institutions of compulsory good fellowship. So much for an experience that failed either to absorb an old culture or create a new one!

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# A People on Wheels

LLOYD MORRIS

## 1. TOY INTO SERVANT

THE YEAR of Henry Ford's death [1947] marked the golden anniversary of the American automotive industry. Detroit, which it had lifted from eleventh to fourth of the nation's cities in population, honored the occasion with appropriate ceremonies.

Meanwhile, early in 1942, all the great assembly lines had ceased moving. Production of cars for civilian use abruptly terminated. But there was scarcely an interruption before the industry's enormous plants began turning out the tools of war. Men only middle-aged could recall a day when the infrequent appearance of a horseless carriage, spluttering and belching smoke, had been an incentive to derision. Yet, when the last ones came off the lines, there were twenty-nine and one half million cars darting along the nation's highways—approximately one to every five adults and children living in the United States.

The absolute dependence of American society on the automobile was manifest during the wartime period of non-production. In order to achieve the highest productive level ever reached by the nation, it was necessary to keep as many of the existing cars as possible on the road. The Federal government

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therefore instituted such precautionary measures as gasoline rationing and the enforcement of a nation-wide speed limit, which prolonged their life, diverting to war production materials, men and machinery normally engaged by automotive requirements. Once a plaything for the rich, the automobile had become an indispensable servant of the masses. In this major transformation was summed up innumerable and pervasive changes which it had wrought in the American social order.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the results of this transformation were so familiar, so taken for granted as long-established features of the nation's life, that Americans were apt to forget the recency of its occurrence. The transformation actually began in 1919; for after the First World War a newly mature generation of Americans, adopting a radically novel attitude to the society which surrounded them, held a very different point of view on the automobile than that of their elders. They did not consider it mainly a luxury and an instrument of recreation. They regarded it as a year-round, day-and-night utility. For many of them, it seemed essential to livelihood, since possession of it obviously augmented their earning power. For all of them, it was a convenience capable of greatly increasing the comfort of personal existence. So the era of the linen duster, visored cap and goggles suddenly came to an end. The introduction of closed cars—usable at all seasons and in all kinds of weather—produced significant results. In ten years, the national registration of automobiles leaped from six to twenty-three millions.

Meanwhile, highway conditions throughout the country had improved little since the first national census of roads was taken, fifteen years earlier. But this, too, was to be changed with startling rapidity. By 1919, all the states had set up highway departments. Three years earlier, the Federal government had instituted a policy of granting financial assistance to the states for the development of rural post roads. In 1921, Con-

gress passed the Federal Highways Act, which laid down a comprehensive program for road development, and pledged the Federal government, with respect to certain types of highway, to match state expenditures dollar for dollar. Thereafter, under the supervision of the state highway departments, localities within each state built and improved roads to create an integrated state-wide system. Under supervision of the Federal government, the states built roads which together formed regional systems. Collectively, all these projects combined into an integrated national system, covering the country with an immense fishnet of highways. By 1945, the nation had more than three million miles of road. Ninety-two percent of its primary state highways, and thirty-nine percent of its county and local roads were surfaced, thus being fit for year-round driving in all weathers. So successfully had the highway program been realized that some fifty-four thousand towns—or about half the communities in the United States—were without direct access to either railroad or river transport, yet were able to depend for their existence on automotive traffic exclusively.

## 2. BRIGHTENING UP THE MORES

Some of the drastic changes which the automobile was producing in the national mores quickly became manifest. A life-long resident and shrewd observer of the Middle West, talking in 1925 with the sociologists Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, asked: "Why on earth do you need to study what's changing in this country?" And he went on to remark, "I can tell you what's happening in just four letters: A-U-T-O!" In *Middletown*, the Lynds noted that ownership of an automobile had already reached the point of being an accepted essential of normal living. Houses were crowding closer to the front paving-line, and flowers, shrubbery and grassplots were giving way to the need for a garage, and a driveway to it. Families no longer spent summer evenings and Sunday afternoons on

their porches, or in their yards; instead, they took to the road in their cars. As an evidence of social status, the make of a family's car had become as important as the physical appearance of its home. Indeed, the practice of mortgaging a home in order to buy an automobile was not uncommon.

Among the working-class families who furnished data to the Lynds, one-half owned cars; men who earned thirty-five dollars a week frequently used one week's income every month to pay for their cars. "We'd rather do without clothes than give up the car," a mother of nine children reported; and another remarked, "I'll go without food before I see us give up the car." A number of families who owned cars were satisfied to live in homes lacking bathroom facilities. This same condition was not uncommon in rural regions. An investigator for the Department of Agriculture asked one farm wife why the family owned a car when it didn't own a bathtub. She replied, with obvious surprise, "Why, you can't go to town in a bathtub."

Although ownership of a car was already recognized as a primary end in life, to which other traditionally approved purposes were to be subordinated, the automobile was upsetting various old-established social adjustments, and coming into conflict with emotionally charged sanctions and taboos. The Lynds remarked that it was making obsolete such time-honored dicta as "Rain or shine, I never miss a Sunday morning at church;" "A high-school boy does not need much spending money;" "Parents ought always to know where their children are." Because of the increasing custom of taking all-day motor trips on Sunday, the automobile was regarded, by conservative folk, as "a threat to the church," and clergymen, aware of the impatience of their congregations, were promising to dismiss them at an earlier hour.

Use of the family car was becoming a source of friction between children and their parents. Youngsters found it possible to join a crowd motoring to a dance in some neighboring town, without asking permission. Among high-school students,

the family's ownership of a car was an important criterion of social eligibility. Boys seldom took girls to social functions without using a car, and some families were said to have bought more luxurious cars chiefly to buttress the social standing of their children. But the automobile was also producing disruptive effects on family life. Fathers, ruefully admitting the declining prestige of family mealtimes, protested against the necessity for making dates with their children in order to see them. Mothers complained of the all but permanent invisibility of daughters constantly absent in other people's cars.

The automobile was displacing the parlor as the locus of preliminaries to courtship—was not this “endangering the home?” And motorized courtship was not always leading to honorable marriage. Houses of prostitution were few, but the judge of the juvenile court asserted that “the automobile has become a house of prostitution on wheels.” Of the girls brought before him, during the previous year, on charges of “sex crimes,” one-third had committed their offenses in automobiles. And, to “the desire of youth to step on the gas when it has no machine of its own” was attributed the theft of more than one hundred and fifty automobiles during the same year. Thus, it was possible for some citizens of Muncie to consider the automobile “an ‘enemy’ of the home and society.”

### 3. URBAN EXPLOSION

While upsetting long-established habits and customs, and challenging traditional concepts of the proper conduct of life, the automobile was also precipitating an urban explosion throughout the country. Up to the turn of the century, most American cities grew compactly outward from the business center. Thereafter, suburban development cautiously followed the railroads and main turnpikes, but only to a limited distance. From 1920 onward, with increasing acceleration, American cities burst their bounds and sprawled indiscriminately over the surrounding countryside.



At first, the outward movement was largely confined to families in the higher income groups, for whom the lure of space, privacy, and rural scenery was indicated by an astonishing increase in the population of "developments" bearing names denoting such attractive features as heights, vistas, parks, and waterfrontage. In the ten years between 1920 and 1930, this movement accounted for the rapid creation of what were virtually new, large communities. Thus, in the vicinity of Los Angeles, the population of Beverly Hills increased by nearly twenty-five hundred percent; that of Glendale by almost four hundred; those of Inglewood and Huntington Park by nearly five hundred percent. In the neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio, the gain in population of Shaker Heights was one thousand percent, that of Garfield Heights five hundred, that of Cleveland Heights more than two hundred. Near Detroit, Grosse Point Park and Ferndale increased their residents by approximately seven hundred percent. Richmond Heights, a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, showed an increase of more than three hundred percent; Webster Grove and Maplewood each more than seventy percent. The outward movement from Chicago swelled the population of Elmwood Park by a sevenfold increase, doubled that of Park Ridge, and added sixty percent to that of Oak Park.

But, because of the increasing diffusion of the automobile among the lower income groups, the exodus from the cities was by no means confined to the economically prosperous. Between 1930 and 1940, the decade of the Great Depression, the population of one hundred and forty American cities increased by six percent, but those of the surrounding metropolitan areas showed an increase of nearly eighteen. The Lynds, reporting on Muncie, Indiana, once again in 1935, found that, under the impact of depression, "People give up everything in the world but their car." Relief authorities made no effort to discourage car-ownership among their clients, who were advised to use their cars in various ways to pick up small

earnings. The automobile, the Lynds judged, was one of the most depression-proof elements of the city's life; far less vulnerable than marriages, divorces, new babies, clothing, and perhaps food. What was true of Muncie was probably true of the country as a whole.

The drift toward the outlying locations of low-income groups previously resident in metropolitan centers reflected, to some degree, a search for cheaper, if not more agreeable quarters. In part, it likewise reflected an increasing decentralization of industry. This was due, originally, to rising urban costs, traffic congestion in metropolitan centers, and growing reliance on automotive trucking for the delivery of supplies as well as the shipping of finished products. Working-class communities therefore sprang up around peripheral industrial plants. This movement was immensely accelerated, during the following decade, by the construction of huge war plants on the outskirts of major American cities. All these factors taken together resulted in a migration of low-income groups—but this would have been impossible without the automobile. The evidence recorded by a survey undertaken in the state of Michigan made this fact obvious: of eight hundred and fifty thousand workers employed in an industry in Michigan, six hundred and fifty thousand depended exclusively on their cars to get to and from work.

The phenomenon of urban explosion, produced by the automobile, created a new type of "supercommunity." Reporting on this, in 1933, for the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, H. D. McKenzie remarked that the automobile had "erased the boundaries which formerly separated urban from rural territory and has introduced a type of local community without precedent in history." This "supercommunity" differed from the old-fashioned metropolis, McKenzie asserted, in both the complexity of its institutional division of labor and the mobility of its population. Nor was it confined to the great cities; it had become "the communal unit of local relations

throughout the entire nation." Every city in the United States, had, to some degree, become "the center of a constellation of smaller centers." This radically new social phenomenon, born of the automobile, generated problems which the automobile further aggravated—and for many of these the American people, toward the middle of the twentieth century, had found no effective solutions.

The optimistic hope of E. P. Ingersoll, expressed fifty years earlier, that the automobile would do away with traffic congestion, seemed almost ludicrous. The streets of American cities were so filled by automobiles that it became almost impossible to drive one. "In some big cities," a writer in *Time* reported, "vast traffic jams never really got untangled from dawn to midnight; the bray of horns, the stink of exhaust fumes, and the crunch of crumpling metal eddied up from them as insistently as the vaporous roar of Niagara." In New York City's garment district, it often took fifteen minutes for a car to move one block. On Los Angeles—one of the most spaciouly built of American cities—transit on certain streets at certain hours was slower than the horse-and-carriage traffic of the nineteenth century.

The effort to solve this single problem had given mid twentieth-century America some of its most characteristic features. One was the multiple-laned concrete express highway, permitting non-stop traffic from the suburbs to the metropolitan center: Chicago's Outer Drive; New York's West Side Elevated Highway and East Side Roosevelt Drive; Detroit's sunken Davison Avenue were merely outstanding examples of a development to which nearly all large American cities were increasingly committed. Ironically, however, these developments, by facilitating access to the metropolitan center, merely intensified an already oppressive traffic congestion. Had the automobile's promise of immensely increased personal mobility been frustrated by its own enormous proliferation? There was evidence that it had. Traffic surveys conducted by the Fed-

cial government indicated that three trips of every four made by Americans in their cars were for necessity purposes; that trips less than five miles in length constituted the major portion of all trips made; that most family shopping was accomplished within a radius of three miles.

In 1922, the National Department Stores made a novel departure by erecting a branch establishment three miles out from the center of St. Louis, Missouri. Within the next twenty years, this innovation was followed, at greatly extended distances, by many department stores of the larger American cities, by the principal mail-order houses, and by the leading operators of chain stores. Suburban shopping centers, with adequate parking space and gas stations, formed a new pattern of urban decentralization, encouraging those who had left the metropolitan center—presumably because the automobile had made it accessible—to remain away from it as much as possible. In this respect the automobile, by precipitating urban explosion, had likewise promoted a new localism, and set up a counter-movement of decreasing circulation. In the suburbs populated by high-income groups that surrounded the country's very largest cities, only the man of the family regularly traveled to and from the city; often he had ceased to rely on his car for these trips and "commuted," as his father might have done in the nineteenth century, by train. Reflecting on one of the major ironies of the automotive age, he could ruefully quote the old hymn of Isaac Watts:

*And 't is a poor relief we gain,  
To change the place, but keep the pain.*

#### 4. SEE AMERICA FIRST

By 1937, fifty-two million people in fifteen million cars were spending an estimated five billion dollars on motor travel: one billion for gas, oil, garaging and repairs; another billion for lodging; approximately one and one-quarter billions for

camping supplies and souvenirs; and some seven hundred millions of dollars on golf courses, soft drinks and hot dogs. Whereas in 1920, only one hundred and twenty-eight thousand cars entered the national parks of the United States, the number had risen, by 1940, to two million. In 1914, there were only two hundred golf courses in the country; in 1940, there were more than five thousand. In 1922, there were only some six hundred tourist camps or courts in the land; in 1940, there were approximately fourteen thousand, having an estimated annual business of thirty-seven millions of dollars. In addition to the accommodations which they furnished, some fifty thousand "tourist homes" offered their domestic amenities to the modern American centaur-on-wheels. The neon-lit plurals of "Eats," "Rooms" and "Cabins" supplied a working vocabulary for the American landscape.

The popularity of tourist courts and camps indicated their adaptation to the needs of that considerable segment of the American motoring public which did not enjoy an elastic income. The roadside camp always offered the privacy of an individual cabin, sometimes added the esthetic appeal of an attractive rural setting, and invariably spared its patrons the embarrassment which they might feel in entering an urban hotel in the clothes of the road. Yet, because of the regrettable imperfection of human nature, these specific advantages also recommended it to motorists not governed by "tourist psychology." In 1936, sociologists from Southern Methodist University, in Dallas, Texas, turned their inquiring minds to the social trends which might be manifest in neighboring tourist camps. Presumably, they were disconcerted by discovering that the principal clientele of these hospitable enterprises was composed, not of tourists, but of local couples whose use of their facilities rarely exceeded an hour's duration. They found that in one camp, a cabin was rented to sixteen different couples during the course of a single night. To non-academic observers this might have suggested a noteworthy deterioration of South-

ern gallantry during the automotive age. But the conclusion of the Dallas sociologists was that, "The growth of these institutions and their toleration by the community are evidences of a changed public attitude toward non-marital intimacies." As against the opinion of the judge of the juvenile court of Muncie, Indiana, expressed a short decade earlier, the report of the Dallas investigators established that progress had been accomplished, during the interval, if not in morality, at least in decorum.

But any disposition to regard abuse of the hospitality of tourist camps as peculiar to Dallas was rudely jolted by J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In a magazine article published in 1940, he described them as "camps of crime," imperiling the communities to which they were adjacent. Many tourist camps, he asserted, were "little more than camouflaged brothels." These were usually closed to the traveling public on Saturdays and Sundays, when anyone whom their proprietors suspected of being a bona-fide tourist would be turned away because there was "more money and a faster turnover in the 'couple' trade." In patronizing these camps at other times, Hoover warned, American tourists were exposing themselves to the attentions of prostitutes, the depredations of gangsters, and the profit-seeking scrutiny of "that lowest of parasites on law enforcement, the divorce detective." All in all, the American motoring public might have been expected to give tourist camps a wide berth. Yet they did nothing of the kind.

##### 5. LIZZIE'S DOUBLE LIFE

But their disregard of Hoover's warning implied no special adventurousness. It may merely have expressed a natural fatalism. For, in the years after 1920, the automobile came to lead a kind of double life. It was, on the one hand, an accepted essential of normal existence, and in many families the most popular member. It was, on the other hand, surrounded by an

aura of violence, danger and imminent death. A comparable position in society could have been held only by a respectable matron devoted to her household, who nevertheless consorted with criminals, slew people indiscriminately, and inspired a wide variety of anti-social conduct. On the American scene, the automobile functioned with precisely this irresponsible dualism. Like many another gift of the age of technological progress, it was by no means a pure blessing.

Before 1920, the hardy American tourist enjoyed a democratic freedom resembling that of the wandering students who roamed medieval Europe. Early tourists formed organizations for mutual help and advice. One of these was called the Tin Can Tourists' Association, and its members tied a tin can to the radiator caps of their cars. Meeting one another on the road, they stopped, exchanged information about road conditions, detours, camp sites, the best garage in the next town. In those days of comradeship and innocence, to slow down when overtaking a pedestrian, and offer a lift, was common practice; an extension to the whole nation of the neighborly friendliness exercised at home. The kindly simplicity of the horse-and-buggy era survived into that of goggles and duster.

Twenty years later, in 1940, the outlook and manners of the American tourist had drastically changed. By then, he had learned that his safety was dubious, whether in or out of his car. Neither caution nor skill would fully protect him, and friendliness was a luxury heavily charged with danger. He set off for his holiday apprehensively. His attitude to his fellow-drivers was incurably hostile. His view of all pedestrians was deeply colored by suspicion. He had become, when seated at the wheel, a dour misanthrope intent on self-preservation and the minding of his own business. For this odd transformation, a number of factors were responsible.

The forty million drivers who infested American highways represented one out of every two inhabitants of the country old enough to drive. They included youngsters of fourteen,

women, the very elderly, and many of the physically and mentally disabled. At the wheel of a complex mechanism requiring precise co-ordination, all persons were very probably not equal, yet the fit and the unfit, the trained and the untrained were alike permitted to pursue happiness in a car. Not surprisingly, this situation exacted a penalty: in an average year, automobiles caused approximately forty thousand deaths; brought about accidents which inflicted personal injuries on over one million people; and damaged one another to a cost of many millions of dollars. These statistics implied the normal hazards of the road, and the American motorist could scarcely be blamed for attributing them to the other fellow, whether pedestrian or driver. For even the experts could not agree on the appropriate endowment for a safe driver.

In 1948, James Stannard Baker, research director of the Northwestern University Traffic Institute, unqualifiedly stated that, "A high-grade moron makes the best auto driver." This mental type, he suggested, was an individual not too bright, but willing to learn, a plodding creature who kept his mind on the task at hand. Unlike the man of superior mind, the moron was not subject to day dreams and not easily bored with the mechanics of driving. Drivers with very high, or very low intelligence ratings, Baker asserted, were highway menaces; intellectuals found driving too easy, and simpletons were prone to witless wool-gathering. But to this reassuring diagnosis, J. R. Crossley, vice president of the Automobile Club of New York, offered a horrified dissent. The safest driver, he claimed, was a person of normal intelligence. And he described the required qualifications as physical, mental and emotional soundness; adequate information about motor vehicle, highway and traffic laws; sound instruction in driving techniques; sufficient experience for the formation of protective habits, skill, and proper attitudes of responsibility, sportsmanship and courtesy. On the average, the American motorist conceived himself as exemplifying all the qualifications demanded by



Crossley, and regarded his fellow drivers as not quite fulfilling those set by Baker. And the yearly toll in deaths, injuries and damages showed no substantial decrease.

Most of the forty thousand deaths annually caused by automobiles were avoidable; they were one of the unnecessary prices which Americans paid for equality of opportunity on the highway. A large majority of the accidents that injured one million Americans were likewise preventable. But not quite all. For in addition to the ordinary hazards of the road, motorists were subjected to others devised, for their disadvantage, by the criminal underworld. In the larger cities of the United States there flourished, from time to time, a prosperous racket based on the faking of automobile accidents to people on whose bodies the appropriate stigmata of physical injury had previously been produced. The racket was cultivated by astute criminals; they were leagued with physicians and lawyers of dubious repute; and careful preparations enabled their subordinates to present a convincing performance. The immediate, and often successful object was to swindle insurance companies as well as frightened motorists out of large sums of money. However skillfully and cautiously he drove, no motorist could consider himself absolutely safe at the wheel of his own car; in any large city, he might become the next victim of this racket.

Nor was he safe if a trusting nature inclined him to spontaneous hospitality while driving. The practice of hitchhiking, an amiable fad invented by youth in the 1920s, became prevalent as an economic necessity during the Great Depression. As a means of facilitating robbery and other crimes, it was quickly adopted by the underworld. By the 1940s, the wistful eye and frenzied thumb of the young, hopefully stationed along roads leading out of town, held a diminishing appeal for the solitary tourist, whose conscience often troubled him as he sped past, but whose car and wallet remained in his own possession when he arrived at his destination.

The new misanthropy of American motordom left few traces on other areas of the national life. It was, so to speak, an allergic disturbance, afflicting citizens otherwise kindly whenever they drove, and only then. It had become epidemic during the period of national prohibition, which brought about the rise to social power of gangsters and racketeers. The members of this new industrial aristocracy rapidly acquired control of the urban night-clubs and speakeasies, the outlying roadhouses, which distributed their products. The underworld elite was also quick in adapting the automobile to its business requirements. It used motor trucks for transport and hijacking. It bought custom-built cars like Al Capone's, with armor-plated bodies and bullet-proof glass, for personal use. It maintained fleets of arsenal-equipped cars for the punitive expeditions made necessary by competitive free enterprise. The practices of the time left a permanent fingerprint on the American language: to be "taken for a ride" no longer connoted a pleasure, but an unfortunate finality.

All these new phenomena suddenly increased the hazards of the road and—reported by the press, portrayed by the films, recorded by writers of fiction—produced, among motorists, a special form of jitters. The Dion O'Banion gang of Chicago, spraying the main streets of suburban Cicero with machine-gun bullets during a daylight raid on the headquarters of Al Capone; the later exploits of John Dillinger, a successful bank-robber and bandit who for several years terrorized Middle Western states—indicated, to innocent motorists, the perils of following the right road at the wrong moment. The guileless quest of a drink—illegal, but sanctioned by custom—might plunge them, inadvertently, into a shooting tangle between officers of the law and indignant enterprisers whose business was being interfered with. Mere nocturnal delay on lonely highways, sometimes made imperative by the conflicting purposes of the sexual instinct and the peculiar social vigilance of small communities, could involve unsuspecting motorists

in hijacking episodes from which they were likely to emerge with wrecked cars, punctured bodies and damaged reputations. That these discouraging contingencies did not bring motoring for pleasure to an abrupt end was much more remarkable than that they contributed to souring the dispositions, and increasing the apprehensiveness, of American drivers.

#### 6. THE TRANSCONTINENTAL BAZAAR

Nevertheless, tourism steadily increased, and within the lifetime of a single generation turned winding dirt roads into broad concrete highways that resembled continuous, elongated bazaars. The pleasant rural landscape, once the motorist reached it, had almost disappeared under the encroachment of conveniences, commercial solicitations, and ingeniously contrived services. Here and there, state or local authorities managed to preserve a grove of trees, relics of a bygone age, under which they set up picnic tables, stoves and water fountains for the hasty use of tourists bent upon getting from one place to another which looked almost precisely like it. But, as he sped along, the motorist could enjoy the hortatory literature of the billboards. From the roadside stands operated by farmers and their wives—the most up-to-date were furnished by city decorators, in old-fashioned gingham and reproductions of “early American” discomfort—he was able to buy vegetables, fruits, eggs, chickens, jams and jellies. Other stands, in close proximity to one another, offered him lawn furniture, “artistic” weathervanes, sun-dials and garden sculpture, assorted antiques, boxes of nuts assembled from the ends of the earth, golf hats and clubs, fishworms and tackle, picture postcards of places he had passed without seeing, domestic pets. To prove to himself that he had actually been in the country, he could buy bunches of wilted wildflowers from enterprising tots artfully arrayed in rags.

If trouble developed with his car, the great outdoor bazaar was well equipped to attend to it. Service, by the middle of the

twentieth century, consisted chiefly in removing a worn unit and replacing it by a new one, and the modern service-man had electrical devices which helped him to analyze internal disorders, as well as improved tools with which to straighten frames, bump out bodies and fenders, and align wheels. Along American roads there were nearly a quarter of a million filling stations; nearly seventy thousand independent repair shops; more than thirty thousand franchised dealers; and approximately twenty thousand purveyors of accessories, tires and batteries. The filling station, in particular, nearly always open for business, was a versatile institution that offered replenishment to the car, and "rest rooms" to its occupants; that sometimes sold toilet articles, canned goods, cigarettes, sandwiches and soft drinks; that often held a jukebox to furnish—while his car radio was turned off—the incessant music that was essential to the American motorist's happiness.

Nor did the motorist need to leave the great bazaar should he prefer not to snatch a bite at the nearest filling station. The quaint old village inns had largely disappeared. They had been replaced by the whimsies of "tea shoppes" and the costly elegance of restored, or merely counterfeited, historic "places" adapted to restaurant use. But, along the endless concrete emporium, there were other institutions that catered to the tourist's appetite. Windmills with parking lots served hamburgers subjected to rituals of glorification, glamorized hot dogs, polychromatic ice cream. Log cabins dispensed clams, lobsters, and chicken-in-the-rough divorced from knife and fork. In the far West, the tourist could turn into a "drive-in," give his order to a waitress garbed like a drum-majorette, contemplate the architecture of fantasy while waiting, and eat his repast from a tray hitched to his car-door, without ever leaving the wheel.

All along the Eastern seaboard, from Maine to Florida, there were belfry-capped buildings, vaguely "colonial," into which a far-sighted native of Massachusetts, Howard Johnson, had

stretched his mother's recipe for homemade ice cream and his own masterly intuition that American motorists wanted meals that were good, familiar and quick. Johnson controlled nearly two hundred establishments that were standardized in architecture, cuisine and service, which his great fleet of trucks supplied with foodstuffs processed in his central kitchens. By sticking to Johnson all the way from Portland to Miami, the tourist could be sure of having almost identical meals every day, thus enjoying the advantages of travel while retaining digestively the illusion of comfortably remaining at home.

But the automobile, and the great bazaar through which it perpetually sped, might in time make home itself an obsolete superfluity in the lives of many Americans. The cult of selective transiency had proved very nearly fatal to old-fashioned resort hotels, formerly booking vacationers for a fortnight or an entire season, but now dedicated only to overnight guests and those too deplorably decrepit to sit upright in a car. It had made Americans reluctant to settle on a holiday place, buy a summer cottage, and return there year after year. The trailer, once a two-wheeled affair used to haul camping equipment, had been transformed into a mobile residence.

The Great Depression had popularized the trailer, the war-time housing shortage had made it a permanent feature, and by the middle of the century a family could pursue an ideally nomadic existence in an air-conditioned, centrally heated coach having sitting room, sleeping accommodations for four, and kitchen equipped with refrigerator, stove and sink. It seemed entirely probable that Americans born in the second half of the twentieth century would spend their infancy in ambulatory nurseries, be snatched off to education by school busses, carry on their courtship at the wheel, relax in drive-in movies, and go to their ultimate immobility in motor hearses. Even livelihood could be earned in transit: the president of a Texas ice-making concern had already acquired a super-trailer

equipped with radio-telephone, to serve as executive office and retail sales establishment.

#### 7. YOU CAN'T KEEP THEM DOWN ON THE FARM

The effect of the automobile on the lives of rural Americans was even more transfiguring than its effect on the lives of those who lived in cities. Almost overnight, it brought to an end the isolation and loneliness, the material meagerness of farm life; disrupted ancient patterns of existence; and changed the very look of the countryside. The crossroads general store, once the farmer's market and meeting place, was forced out of business by his new mobility; he could drive past it to the village, and—perhaps not finding there what he wanted—continue on to the nearest county seat, twenty or thirty miles away. Open-country churches were abandoned, and their congregations consolidated. Warren H. Wilson, a member of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, discussed, in 1924, the case of a rural pastor who purchased a car, to the indulgent amusement of his flock, and used it to establish connections, on each Sabbath day, with eight services of worship. "I rode with him one Sunday over his circuit," Wilson noted. "He needed only two sermons, the same number as before, but he had quadrupled his professional efficiency." The one-room school succumbed to the same fate as the open-country church. Of the two hundred thousand existing in 1916, fewer than one hundred and fourteen thousand remained in 1940; the rest had been replaced by consolidated schools whose buildings and equipment compared favorably with those of any urban schools.

The change in rural medical practice impressively showed the effect of the automobile on American farm life. Kitchen operations and home nursing were still the rule in the century's first decade. In 1909, a young physician began practice in a Michigan town having a population of one thousand;

five other doctors and fifteen practical nurses were also serving the town and surrounding countryside, the nearest hospital was more than twenty miles distant. After ten years of reliance on a pair of horses and a rig, the young doctor bought a Model-T. Though he could only use it in summer, he built up so large a practice that he required a stable of six horses to visit his patients in the winter. A few years later, he bought a closed car and dispensed entirely with his stable. Fifteen years later, in 1912, he was putting thirty-five thousand miles a year on his car, was on the staff of three hospitals all of which he could reach within a morning, and saw patients as far away as fifty miles. In his home town there were no longer any practical nurses, and there was only one other physician. Kitchen operations were unknown; the town maintained an ambulance, and patients could be speeded to any of several hospitals equipped with X-ray, blood bank, oxygen tent, and the latest operating facilities.

To the farm-wife, meanwhile, came the home demonstration agent, a missionary from the nearest agricultural college or state university, an expert in home economics. She chose the most intelligent farm women on her circuit, and trained them as local leaders. They, in turn, put on exhibits at grange meeting halls, schools and farm homes. They held cooking schools, health schools, canning demonstrations, home-furnishing and gardening programs. In 1920, there were fewer than fifty thousand leaders. Twenty years later, the number of agents had nearly trebled, and the number of volunteer leaders had multiplied fivefold. By this time, farm wives were driving long distances in their cars to attend home demonstration meetings. In the Eastern states their round trips averaged seven miles; in the Middle West, thirteen; in the Far West, twenty-four, with trips as long as one-hundred and twenty-five miles to county-wide meetings a common occurrence.

Better farming also came to the farm in an automobile, with the county agent who brought the technical information of

the state experiment station, and the Federal Department of Agriculture, to bear on local needs. In 1920, two thousand county agents drew to their meetings an attendance of twelve million farmers; in 1940, nearly four thousand agents reached forty-six million farmers. At the same time, an expanding network of new organizations was reaching into the sparsely settled regions of America, and enlarging their opportunities for a more satisfying life. Rotary luncheon clubs came in, along with junior agricultural clubs, the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. Co-operative marketing associations were formed, applying modern merchandising to the farmer's products; co-operative canneries and quick-freezing plants were established, to process them. The automobile, by breaking down the farmer's isolation, had socialized his occupation, furnished him with a pattern of community existence, and enlarged his horizon until it equalled that of the townsman.

#### 8. THE MADDING WHEELS OF BRAZEN CHARIOTS

All night and all day, toward the middle of the century, the main highways and feeder roads of America roared with the passage of the nation's six million trucks, its nearly two hundred thousand motor busses. The trucks alone required the services of four and one half million drivers, the largest occupational class in the American economy, except for farmers. They brought wider markets to farmers, increased services to city-dwellers and—with the busses—new life to the many thousand American communities that had no connection with the rest of the country except by highway. They were commonplace features of the American scene, integral elements of the national transport system; yet their origin dated back no more than thirty years.

Long-distance haulage by truck was born of the First World War, which put a strain on railroads to which they were unequal. As chief of a Highway Transport Commission, President Wilson appointed Roy D. Chapin, who had driven the



first Oldsmobile from Detroit to New York. Chapin, aware that the government had ordered some thirty thousand trucks for delivery to France, where they were essential to the distribution of ammunition, food and clothing to troops, determined to put them to immediate use. Ordinarily, these trucks would have been put on railroad flat cars and freighted to Atlantic ports. Instead, Chapin had them loaded with war supplies, and driven to seaboard. These trucks, lurching over bad roads, detouring around unsafe bridges, pioneered the immense, swift highway fleets of the mid-century, transporting for at least a part of its journey everything that Americans ate, wore or used.

On the four-lane main highway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, California, the nocturnal tourist might pass no less than four hundred and fifty trucks with their trailers. These combinations measured fifty feet from bumper to bumper. The truck rode on ten immense tires, the trailer on twelve. The truck had pneumatic brakes, and fifteen separate gear shifts for various speeds and hill conditions. Each of these vast road-liners carried twenty tons of freight. Moving eastward over the Rockies, the tourist could pass the great Diesel-powered trucks of the Pacific Inter-mountain Express, bound on a five-day run to Chicago; the company, with its fleet, covered twelve thousand miles of route.

Out from Des Moines, Iowa, a newspaper dispersed its three hundred trucks to bring readers throughout the state their morning paper on the day of publication. Out from Grand Rapids, Michigan, there rolled the five hundred trucks and nearly seven hundred trailers of the Interstate Motor Freight System, to flow over a network of routes covering sixteen states; an intricate system with forty-one terminals and many more call stations, linked by teletype, and controlled from a dispatcher's office at headquarters. From the fifteen-acre market in Benton Harbor, Michigan—the largest growers' market in the

world—the huge refrigerator trucks poured out to more than five hundred communities scattered over half the continent.

On a busy night Washington Market, in New York City, received sixteen hundred truckloads of produce drawn from a radius of more than two hundred miles, and five thousand truck trips were required to distribute the receipts to city stores. Over the nation's roads, at night, moved the great oval tank trucks, bringing milk to cities; the tank trucks of the oil corporations, delivering gasoline and oil to filling stations; the refrigerator trucks of the meat packers; the bread trucks of vast bakery-plants, servicing the stores and restaurants of half a state; the vans of the chain-store corporations, replenishing stock in outlying branches; the giant padded vans of carriers who moved the household goods of itinerant Americans from one town to another; the trucks hauling livestock from farm to stockyard; the coal trucks bound from mine to city; the big semi-flat trailers carrying baled cotton to mills and warehouses; the frozen food trucks speeding fish from New England and strawberries from Florida; the double truck-trailers moving new cars to dealers.

And with the trucks, by day and by night, rushed the busses that carried Americans into nearly every town on the map of their country. These were the lineal descendants of the "jitneys" that swarmed about American cities during the First World War; aged passenger cars that plied irregular routes, charging a nickel a ride. Some of the busses were swift and small, little larger than elongated sedans. Some were long-distance coaches, carrying thirty-six passengers in reclining arm-chairs. Some were "nite-coaches"—compact sleeping cars on rubber tires, with berths and tiled washrooms, radios and drinking fountains. Competing with the railroads, and often operating between points which the railroads did not serve, the nation's twenty-five hundred bus lines, covering more than three hundred thousand miles of route, were by the middle of

the century carrying more than one-third of the country's total intercity passenger traffic.

#### 9. EVERY MAN HAS BUSINESS AND DESIRE

Less than sixty years after the first native horseless carriage rattled over a Massachusetts road, one million Americans were employed in the manufacture of motor vehicles and parts. Eight million more were employed in related automotive fields. Approximately one of every six business firms in the United States was in some way dependent, for its profits, on the automotive industry.

Practically all Americans with annual incomes of more than three thousand dollars were car-owners. Of approximately eight million, having incomes ranging from fifteen hundred to three thousand dollars, nearly six million owned cars. Of nine million, whose incomes were less than fifteen hundred, but more than seven hundred and fifty dollars, five million possessed automobiles. A survey, in 1936, of five and one half million families, not on government relief but having incomes of less than seven hundred and fifty dollars a year, showed that two million owned cars. And the same survey reported that there were Americans whose annual income, in cash, was as low as two hundred and fifty dollars—and who nevertheless were owners of cars.

The fact was that the automotive industry could not operate at normal capacity if it depended for its market on those who could actually afford to purchase its products and pay cash for them. Therefore—in what were euphemistically called normal times—it inveigled Americans into the habit of leaning the present against the future. It taught them that their first duty as citizens was to consume; and to hasten the process of consumption, it also persuaded them that prestige required their dissatisfaction with any model as soon as it had been superseded by a later one. For to develop a continuous mass market, the automotive industry had to sell to those who could

not afford to buy; and it also had to make them—annually if possible—replace what they had bought but had not yet paid for.

This situation led to certain curious practices. You might suppose that automobile dealers were sellers of new cars. They were not. For every new car they sold, they had to sell at least two old ones, sometimes more. When Joe Doakes wanted a new car, he didn't wish to put down much cash. He turned in his old car to the dealer. No matter what its value, he was usually given credit that approximated a down payment amounting to one-third the cost of the new car he proposed to buy. He then signed twelve or eighteen monthly notes covering the unpaid balance, with interest sometimes running as high as twenty-five percent. These notes were payable, not to the dealer, but to one of several great financing companies. Having completed this transaction, sometimes without any cash payment, Doakes drove off in his new car.

The dealer promptly discounted Doakes's notes; thus receiving, immediately, the cash that Doakes hadn't yet paid anyone for the car he drove off in. Then the dealer put Doakes's old car up for sale, at an established price fixed for its vintage. Usually, he had to accept a still older car from its purchaser. He repeated the note-and-discount routine, and tried to dispose of his newly acquired antique. This sale might involve the acceptance of a still more ancient relic. But at some point in the series of transactions that began with cashless Joe Doakes, a decrepit vehicle reached the junkyard.

About two-thirds of all American car buyers—whether they acquired new or used cars—did their purchasing, like Doakes, on the trade-in and "painless" installment system. This meant that the vast, complex mechanism of mass production and distribution was powered by a national alacrity in signing promissory notes. The economic, tangible reality which these notes represented was an endless procession of cars slowly making their way to the junkyard. But each car in that immense pro-

cession was so far removed from the note that it secured, that nobody cared where it happened to be, or who had possession of it. As Thurman W. Arnold pointed out, the procession supported installment paper (a credit instrument) in precisely the same fashion that the gold buried at Fort Knox supported the national currency and credit; everybody believed in its existence, and this universal confidence was sufficient. Faith in the junkyard stream of antiques kept the assembly lines moving at a profitable rate of speed.

Somewhere along that dismal road, even very poor Americans were able to intercept cars that they could afford to buy—on the installment plan. They paid more for these cars than they were worth; so had the dealers who originally accepted them as trade-ins. For it was not to the industry's advantage to permit a cash—and competitive—market in used cars; such a market would inevitably depress prices to a point where Joe Doakes might find it more advantageous to buy a good used car than a new one.

The high cost of installment buying, the fact that the automotive industry was constantly taking mortgages on the future incomes of consumers, did not escape criticism. The social results were dubiously regarded by many authorities. Since installment purchase encouraged Americans to buy cars more costly than their means warranted, it also prompted them to reduce other expenditures; even for such presumably basic needs as food, clothing, shelter and medical service. In this way it operated to contract the economy; and this effect conceivably could reach a point where the market for cars itself would contract. But the major point made by critics was that installment purchase of cars deprived Americans of the satisfaction of important social needs.

To this, in ordinary times, the automotive industry had a ready answer. Without installment buying, it couldn't expand; it couldn't even stabilize production at a high rate. Unless it was able to do so, the jobs of nine million people would be im-

perilled; the business of one out of every six firms would be adversely affected; the whole national economy would be seriously impaired.

The dilemma appeared to be a real one.

Yet the average American looked at the whole situation from quite another point of view. A new car was a package containing about one hundred thousand miles of transportation. Well-to-do folk bought the whole package. Less advantaged Americans bought whatever portion of the package they felt they dared risk. It might be the last sixty thousand miles. It might be only the last six thousand. But whatever it was, it put wheels under them.

And to be on wheels was the desire of every American. The privilege of mobility was the criterion of happiness, the evidence of personal success. Was it not, therefore, more important than anything else? The conviction that it was had created the nation's most brutalizing industry, its most rebellious labor union, its largest corporate colossus, its second largest fortune.

And it had, besides, completely transformed the society and civilization in which Americans lived.

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## America's Responsibilities

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

THE SUICIDE of Europe has thrust upon the American people the unwelcome responsibilities of leadership in the Western World at a time when they are also confronted by far-reaching internal readjustments. During the same half-century the Americans have been faced by three major new developments, each of which has necessitated profound modifications in their traditional mores and institutions. The conquest of the continent, which absorbed so much of the national energy and determined so much of the national view of life for nearly three hundred years, has been completed. The growth of industrial capitalism has caused a widespread economic insecurity, which has been followed by a vast expansion of the powers and responsibilities of government, and has resulted also in a serious curtailment of the personal liberty and equality of opportunity that have hitherto been the chief characteristics of American society. And the growth of international conflicts in a rapidly shrinking world has put an end to the possibility of isolation and threatens to destroy the whole heritage of Western civilization. These new problems can be met only by conscious and deliberate effort, guided by an awareness of the ends to be reached as well as by a consideration of the

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available means; they cannot be solved by allowing events to take their course.

As long as there was an open frontier and an unsettled West, material conditions in themselves promoted equality and provided opportunity. What was chiefly required of the government was that it should give men access to public land without discrimination and should refrain from creating systems of privilege. In the age of Jefferson and Jackson, democracy was best served by a state that took as little positive action as possible. But since the closing of the frontier and the growth of the big corporations, material conditions have no longer favored freedom and equality. Henceforth, some kind of deliberate and constructive program must be worked out. It has become necessary to plan for freedom.

Upon the ability of the American people to deal successfully with this situation depends not only their own destiny but also, in large measure, that of the entire human race. For the modern world is divided between two rival social systems and two rival philosophies of life, one of which is based on the ideal of personal freedom and the other on the ideal of totalitarian collectivism. And while Western society values personal freedom, it may finally choose collectivism if it comes to the conclusion that the alternative is genuine freedom only for a few and economic insecurity and exploitation for the majority. Men are waiting for a convincing demonstration of the possibility of maintaining a universally free way of life in a mechanized economy. To provide such a demon—is the peculiar and inescapable responsibility of the Americans. For if their attempt to maintain freedom results only in chaos and degeneration, or if they finally surrender to some form of totalitarianism, then it is improbable that liberal ideals can be preserved by smaller and weaker nations elsewhere.

The immediate problems are practical, but their implications are spiritual and philosophical; and without a full awareness of these implications they cannot be solved successfully.



To deal simply with obvious dilemmas as they arise, without taking thought of ultimate objectives, means being carried by the current; and in the twentieth century the current of events is leading toward the totalitarian state. What is needed is not only a concrete program of economic reform, but also a reasoned philosophy of freedom and an emotional and religious faith. Freedom cannot be preserved merely by a pragmatic approach. As Whitman declared, the preservation of American ideals depends on the growth of the appropriate "religious and moral character beneath the political and productive and intellectual bases of the States." Without this "religious and moral character" no merely practical proposals can be effective.

The animating principle of American nationality has been the belief that the average man can be trusted with freedom and responsibility, that he does not require the guidance of an authoritarian Church or of a privileged aristocracy or bureaucracy, and that whenever he finds adequate opportunity for exercising initiative, hidden talents and energies will be released for constructive purposes. This belief, derived from the Christian faith in the infinite value of the individual soul, and brought for the first time to full fruition in the open spaces of the American continent, has justified itself again and again in American history from the first settlements in Virginia and Massachusetts down to the Second World War. It constitutes the greatest moral and spiritual resource of the American people. And throughout the history of America it has exercised a magnetic influence upon the development of Europe. The revolutionary doctrine of equality, preached by European radicals but most fully exemplified in the American world, has, in fact, been the chief provocation of European internal conflicts; and the inability of Europe to incorporate it into her own system and to adapt her own institutions to it has been the main underlying cause of the final breakdown of the European social order and the resultant growth of totalitarianism.

Yet although this faith has been the distinguishing feature

of American civilization, and although it has been affirmed by all those statesmen and intellectuals who have been most characteristically American, it has never been accepted by all Americans, nor has it sufficiently permeated the American mind or found expression in American systems of thought. Much of American history has been a conflict between the American ideal of democracy and the European attitudes of class privilege and government by an elite. And when America has failed, it has usually been because it has not been true to its own genius but has been too much influenced by doctrines and precedents derived from Europe. The most notable example of this tendency was the Federalist and Hamiltonian politico-economic system, which was deliberately copied from European models and was based on a European belief in a ruling class and distrust of democracy. It was this system, embodied in American constitutional law, that made possible the growth of capitalism with its attendant inequality and insecurity. In the twentieth century a similar example of European influence has been provided by those radical movements that have borrowed their ideology from European collectivism. For while the collectivism of the left professes to believe in democracy, in reality it is led by men who distrust the capacity of the ordinary citizen and who argue that he is always swayed by propaganda and indoctrination; and its real tendency is toward the formation of a new elite of radicals who will assume responsibility for the guidance of the masses. Americans have been too receptive to undemocratic doctrines because they have not thought sufficiently in American terms; their theory has always been less bold and more imitative than their practice. And for the same reason they have too often been corrupted by racial prejudices and doctrines of racial inequality wholly inconsistent with their national ideals.

But to assert simply that Americans do not have sufficient confidence in their own ideals would be too superficial a diagnosis. A deeper analysis reveals certain unsolved contradictions

within those ideals themselves. For while the Americans have believed in the right of all men to freedom and opportunity, they have also exalted the drive of the individual will toward wealth and power; they have adopted a morality of personal (and largely material) success; and as a result of both their economic system and their Calvinist heritage, they have exalted activity above contemplation and material accumulation above aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual development. This emphasis on the will, on conquest, and on a kind of materialistic asceticism was the natural and appropriate accompaniment of the pioneering process; and as long as there was still empty land to be settled, it was possible to reconcile it with the democratic ideal. Yet there has always been conflict between the ideal of freedom for all and the drive of power-hungry individuals for privilege and success. In fact, it has always been groups seeking to acquire privileges, or afraid of losing them, who have turned back toward Europe and borrowed European notions of class rule and distrust of the people. The conflict between the European and the American has been, at bottom, a conflict between different aspects of the American spirit. And since the settlement of the West and the growth of capitalism, the continued emphasis on material conquest has become a cultural lag that is no longer appropriate to the social environment. It can no longer be reconciled with the democratic ideal; and it is a main cause of that sense of frustration and maladjustment that is so pervasive a characteristic of the American mind in the twentieth century.

Can democracy be preserved without imposing some kind of coercive restraint upon the will of individuals? Can men learn voluntarily to respect the rights of their neighbors, or is the ideal of freedom for all inherently self-contradictory? This is the central American problem, and upon its solution depends the future history of mankind.

In the last resort, as all the early spokesmen of American democracy recognized, such questions can be answered only in

religious and philosophical terms. Confidence in the human capacity for freedom depends, as Jefferson declared, on the belief in an innate moral sense and, as Emerson proclaimed, on the belief that man has the lawgiver within himself and can trust his own deepest intuitions. And these are essentially matters of faith, which are not susceptible of scientific proof or disproof. Democracy, like every other human enterprise, is an experiment that involves risks, and there can be no guaranty of a happy outcome.

But while the history of America confirms, on the whole, this trust in human nature, it also suggests that confidence in the individual is not enough. Man's moral sense and spiritual intuitions require the objective support of a general view of life and of appropriate social institutions. Every individual belongs to a society, and his standards of value are socially conditioned. And the creation of a view of life and of social institutions that will corroborate the American democratic ideal is a task that has remained unfinished. Americans, said Whitman, "were somehow being endow'd with a vast and more and more thoroughly-appointed body, and then left with little or no soul."

Every high civilization is imbued with a sense of form, style, and order. The individual feels himself to be a part of a social unity and harmony, which is regarded as the embodiment of universal and objective ideals and as a reflection of an ultimate harmony in nature. He finds emotional security and personal fulfillment, not through the assertion of his will against the natural and social environment, but through participation in the processes of nature and in the collective enterprise of society. Yet in subordinating himself to the social order, he does not deify it or endow it with absolute and final authority (as in the totalitarian states). He is loyal to it only because, and insofar as, it is an attempt to realize ideals to which he himself gives spontaneous allegiance and by which he himself can achieve the full development of his own personality; and he

recognizes that evil is an inherent element in human life, that concrete social institutions must always fall short of ideals, and that the struggle to realize them more fully is unending. It is only in these terms that the apparent polarity of freedom and order can be transcended. The synthesis of individual will and social discipline, without which there can be no high civilization, is to be found, not in the intellectual parts of human nature, but in the sentiment of patriotism, in the moral sense, in religious idealism, and (as Whitman declared) in "the manly love of comrades."

American civilization has never sufficiently developed this sense of form, order, and underlying harmony, as its literature, its philosophy, and its economic development abundantly make manifest. Moreover, its animating standards have become (in the twentieth century) predominantly acquisitive and competitive, while the more important values of aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual development have received little social sanction or encouragement. Without a deeper and more comprehensive sense of order, the United States cannot become a high and stable civilization, nor can the Americans as individuals find emotional security and fulfillment. But this sense cannot be borrowed from elsewhere (as American intellectuals have sometimes been tempted to believe). Europe was imbued with a sense of order during its periods of high civilization; but the European order was always feudal and hierarchical, and has never successfully adapted itself to the principle of equality. As Whitman insisted, any American order must be a native product, grounded in the concept of human equality and fostered by a deeper understanding of American society and the needs and aspirations of the American man.

And this development of a more vital sense of order is indispensable if the Americans are to retain their freedom. The United States was able to flourish without it for three hundred years chiefly because of its unique situation—its open

frontier and its rapidly expanding economy. But when its society became less mobile and more static, both a greater restraint on individual ambition and a fuller individual participation in social enterprises became necessary. And if this problem is not solved through the growth of a genuine social idealism, then it can be predicted that America will finally become totalitarian. For totalitarianism is a method of enforcing order upon a people who have lost any genuine sense of unity. Either the Americans will achieve an organic order based in the free participation of individuals, or they will succumb to a mechanistic order imposed by an absolute state. Either they will give a free allegiance to their society as an attempt to realize common rational values and liberal ideals, or they will become merged on a subhuman level in a mass movement of emotionalism and fanaticism.

The foundation of an American order can only be a respect for the freedom of every individual, in the confidence that by the fullest development of his own personality he can contribute most fully to the welfare of society and that (since man is a social being) a true individualism prefers to express itself in co-operation rather than in conflict. This trust in the individual is the American faith, and like all the faiths by which men live it transcends reason. Yet although one cannot prove by intellectual argument that this faith is true, one can demonstrate that it is necessary. For a denial of it leads inexorably to the enforced order of the totalitarian state.

The primary purpose of American social and economic institutions should therefore be to maintain the dignity of individuals, to extend their freedom, and to provide means for the fullest and most harmonious development of the human personality. But since the Civil War this purpose, although still avowed in theory, has ceased to be the guiding principle of the American economy. The first objective of capitalism is to maximize production; and where the preservation of the freedom and dignity of the individual personality appears to be incom-

patible with greater productivity, capitalism prefers the latter. But to live by the American faith means to uphold personal freedom as the only ultimate standard for the judgment of all social and economic development.

Personal freedom was the guiding principle of the agrarian economy that prevailed in the United States during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The tradition of agrarian democracy is the strongest and the most distinctive element in the American inheritance; and the doctrines of its spokesmen have a permanent validity as the intellectual foundations of a free economy. If Americans are to regain their freedom, they must adapt the agrarian system to large-scale production. But this means that the principles of agrarianism must be carefully distinguished from those of the capitalism that succeeded it and that so largely borrowed agrarian slogans and used them in its own defence.

Agrarianism upheld the rights of private property, believing that without it there could be no personal freedom; but what it defended was the property which was honestly gained by the "mixing" of labor with nature, not that acquired by speculation, legal manipulation, or political influence. It sought to create a social system in which all men owned property, or could hope to acquire it, and in which there could be none of the "accumulation of wealth by law without industry" that John Taylor regarded as the essence of aristocracy. It placed no limits on the property any individual could accumulate by his own industry, ability, and initiative; but it opposed all forms of vested interest and special privilege, and it argued that charters, contracts, and laws of inheritance were made by society and could be changed when their effect was to perpetuate unjust equalities. It believed, moreover, that given an equitable legal and financial system, which did not protect monopolies or facilitate speculation, then the proper regulator of the free economy was the free market, and that the real effect of any political interference with the market was to

create special privileges and to transfer property from those who had rightfully earned it.

There can be no free economy without a free market, since the only alternative to regulation by the market is a centralized planning authority, endowed with coercive powers and independent of popular pressures. Obviously the activities of the government must be much broader and more varied than in the time of Jefferson, but there is an important difference between regulation intended to make the market work more smoothly and more equitably and that which has the effect of changing a market economy into something else; and it is only the former kind of regulation that can fairly be described as "planning for freedom." A first step toward the creation of a free economy would be the removal of all those interferences with the free market, such as the tariff and monopolistic price fixing, that have developed under capitalism. But since certain forms of economic enterprise are inherently monopolistic, it is necessary to transfer them from private to public ownership, in the manner exemplified in the TVA. And since (as Taylor pointed out) "currency and credit are social rights" and not manifestations of the natural right of property, they should be under social control.

But the main objective of a free economy is the widest possible diffusion of ownership; and while this means the maintenance of independent private ownership where it still exists, in farming and in small business enterprise, it should involve radical changes in the organization of large-scale production. The position of the wage earner in the large corporation, having no security of employment, no control over the conditions under which he works, and no share of responsibility for determining the policies upon which his livelihood depends, is a negation of American ideals of individual freedom, and initiative. He is not a free man but a "hireling" (in *The Star Spangled Banner* the hireling is classified with the slave). Even when the wage earner has no specifically economic grievances,



he still suffers from a sense of alienation from the full rights and responsibilities of manhood; and for this reason economic adjustments alone are unlikely to prevent conflicts between capital and labor. Whether by legal redefinition of the meaning of property rights, by industrial statesmanship, or by trade union pressure, wage earners should be able to acquire job security, a participation in management, and a fair share both in the profits and in the risks of the corporations for which they work. Such changes may be resisted by many members of the capitalistic class, "exclaiming" (as in the time of John Taylor) "against the invasion of property and against levelism." Yet their purpose would be to maintain those principles in which American capitalism professes to believe: individual freedom, private enterprise and initiative, and the American way of life.

Caught between the conflicting programs of big-business capitalism and big-government socialism, American people have not sufficiently explored the resources of their own tradition. Yet that tradition, as defined in economics by Franklin, Jefferson, Taylor, the Jacksonians, and Lincoln, and in literature by Emerson and Whitman, suggests the possibility of another alternative; and by adhering to it and developing it the Americans, in the twentieth century as in the eighteenth, may again liberate themselves by their own efforts and other nations by their example. To the spiritual core of that tradition, the belief in human freedom and equality, most Americans have remained instinctively loyal. What they lack is a stronger faith in themselves, a fuller understanding of their own principles, and a sense of direction.

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## 2. ESSAYS OF CRITICISM

### Browning

F. L. LUCAS

Napoléon, les bras croisés, est plus expressif que l'Hercule furieux battant l'air de ses poings d'athlète. Jamais les gens passionnés ne sentiront cela . . . L'art de passion est sûr de plaire, mais ce n'est pas l'art souverain; il est vrai que l'époque démocratique rend peu à peu impossible l'art de sérénité: le troupeau turbulent ne connaît plus les dieux —AMIEL.

AT FIRST SIGHT those Great Twin Brethren of the Victorian era, Tennyson and Browning, are wildly unlike. What greater contrast could there be than between a tall black-cloaked, black-bearded, black-blooded recluse in the Isle of Wight, and a sociable frisking little gentleman, who drew from Tennyson the growl that Browning would certainly 'die in a white tie,' and from a lady who had met him at dinner the question—'Who was that too exuberant financier?'; between a poet whose style was as meticulously polished as he was himself shaggy and unkempt, and a poet who might wear evening-dress himself, but often left his hastily scribbled poems as fuzzy and prickly and tangled as a furse-bush; between the writer of *Tithonus*, with an immeasurable sadness underlying his talk about 'the larger hope', and the writer of *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, who looked on the world and, behold, it was very good, with

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From *Ten Victorian Poets*, by F. L. Lucas. The Cambridge University Press, 1940.

an even better one to follow? They are as different as the lady in the Japanese story, who kept butterflies, from her neighbour, the lady who preferred creeping things and caterpillars. The contrast had already struck contemporaries. FitzGerald found in Tennyson unforgettable things, in Browning only 'Cockney sublime, Cockney energy': Carlyle wrote, 'Alfred knows how to jingle, Browning does not,' and again of Browning, 'I wish he had taken to prose. Browning has far more ideas than Tennyson, but is not so truthful. Tennyson means what he says, poor fellow. Browning has a meaning in his twisted sentences, but he does not really go into anything or believe much about it. He accepts conventional values.'

Here Carlyle seems to me, though he exaggerates Browning's inability to 'jingle,' to be mainly right. But under this contrast between the two poets there lies, I think, a deeper resemblance. They were both typically Victorian. Browning tended to wear his Victorian clothes inside out, by way of being original; but they were the same clothes; and now that time has worn them thin, Browning too looks a little threadbare. Both he and Tennyson seem to me pure poets damaged by being too much honoured as prophets in their own country. In consequence they were led more and more to preach, where they should have sung. The mantle of Elijah was thrown upon them: under it they lost their vision and their heads. Donne was wiser, who wrote lyrics in his youth and sermons in his old age; and so, instead of muddling the two, made great literature of both.

Still, when we regret that the Victorian poets should have spent so much of their force on propaganda, there is one point we tend to forget. This conviction of their own importance as thinkers and teachers may have helped them as well as hindered; if it led them to believe in much nonsense, it may also have helped them to believe in themselves, and so to accomplish much that we 'half-believers in our casual creeds' cannot. For though our generation can criticize the Victorian poets,

let us frankly admit that it cannot equal them. Even a flimsy banner may be better to fight under than none at all.

But as we look back to-day on Browning's life and work, both alike seem to me to gain a sudden interest at the point where he turns from a rather childish philosopher into a passionate human being. His early years had lacked colour: he grew up in a comfortable, uneventful home in Camberwell and, when his father said, 'Well, Robert, what are you going to be?', Robert had only to reply that he thought he would be a poet, and sit down to prepare himself for that vocation by reading through Johnson's *Dictionary*. Then in 1845, when he was three and thirty and might have complained with much more justice than Byron at that age,

What has life, then, brought to me?  
Nothing except thirty-three,

something happened. He suddenly sat down and wrote to a completely strange lady: 'I love your books, dear Miss Barrett, and I love you too.' There is no need to recall that mid-Victorian love-story, as moving as Rossetti's or Meredith's, which still forms the subject of a new book once every six months—the pale little poetess, Elizabeth Barrett, with her black, spaniel ringlets, shuttered up in a darkened room in Wimpole Street; that terrible patriarch her father, with his West Indian slaves and his mansion in Herefordshire built so appropriately in the Turkish style, whose first and last commandment to his sons and daughters was, 'Thou shalt not marry,' and whose transports of fury at the mere mention of an engagement used to leave the miserable culprit swooning in the arms of her half-swooning sisters; and then the gradual miracle by which the supposed hopeless invalid was fascinated by her lover into that audacious flight to Italy. 'So,' commented Wordsworth, 'Robert Browning and Miss Barrett have gone off together. I hope they understand each other; no one else would.' They did—with a completeness few married couples have ever

equalled. Mr. Barrett's comments are not recorded; but he never forgave his daughter, never condescended to open her letters though, in the state of her health, for all he knew they might have contained the news that she was dying. His children had judged him only too well; as Elizabeth put it: "If a prince from Eldorado should come with a pedigree of lineal descent from some signiory in the moon in one hand, and a ticket of good behaviour from the nearest Independent Chapel in the other . . ." "Why even then," said my sister Arabella, "it would not do." To explain Mr. Barrett, indeed, it needed Dr. Freud.

But after this one burst of romance Browning's life settled down again into that even tenor which it kept till its end at Venice in 1889. And so the year 1845 remains almost as central in his career as 1850 in Tennyson's. It produced what seems to me one of his best single volumes, *Dramatic Romances*; it produced his own romance with Elizabeth Barrett: the memorial of which, in its turn, is his most famous work, *The Ring and the Book*. For Browning would never have written that with such passion, had he not seen in the frail little Pompilia his own dead wife, and in her rescue by the priest Caponsacchi a counterpart of that elopement from Wimpole Street more than twenty years before.

And so it is, I think, the Browning who feels, that matters; not the Browning who speculates about the Universe. For his speculations were rather a South Sea Bubble, however brightly coloured. But just as Tennyson outlives his own prophecies, as a painter of sky and earth, a musician of wave and tree, so Browning becomes worth hearing when he turns from his preaching to catch the leap of a lover's pulse or the answering flush on a girl's face. It is his lovers that live, just as the loves of Horace have outlived all the laws of Augustus—happy or tragic, faithful or faithless; triumphant in their brief pride above the dust of a dead city, while the sheep-bells tinkle

where its belfries tolled; or saddened amid the desolate indifference of the Roman Campagna; or stepping gaily from a gondola in Venice to meet the dagger gleaming in the archway's gloom; now watching the alchemist pound the blue poison for a rival's lips, or quietly strangling a fickle mistress, so as to keep her always, with her own long, coiling hair; now pressing a rose-leaf for remembrance in a dead girl's hand, or riding for the last time on earth with a woman loved in vain, or remembering sadly, yet gladly, on a death-bed the stolen meetings of long ago. The same fine vitality breathes in Browning's treatment of other sides of human life, whenever there is no ill-pointed moral being dug into the reader's ribs—when the Duke of Ferrara describes his last Duchess, or Caliban sits creating his god Setebos in his own image, or Childe Roland comes to the cursed Tower among the sunset hills. Where Browning is content to be a pure artist, he can be a vivid one. Of course the Browning Societies with typical English Philistinism wanted a moral even for *Childe Roland*; an adulterous generation asking for a sign, they approached the author; but for once they had to go empty away; it was just a dream-fantasy made from a phrase in Shakespeare, a horse in tapestry, a tower seen in the Carrara Mountains—he forgot the rest. But perhaps of all these characters the most brilliant is the Bishop who orders his tomb at St. Praxed's, with his naïve and nonchalant Renaissance way of serving at once Jove and Jehovah, Aphrodite and Mary of Nazareth. Most of Browning's figures are very much himself; he stands in their shoes rather than in their skins; in consequence, as a dramatist, he is no Shakespeare: but when, as here, the character required does fit his own personality and his own tastes, the result can be astonishingly effective. Here, his moral disapproval for the nonce suspended, Browning with his appreciation of the good things of both worlds could feel a vivid, if ironic, sympathy towards his half-pagan churchman—

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And then how I shall lie through centuries,  
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,  
And see God made and eaten all day long,  
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste  
Good strong thick stupetizing incense-smoke!  
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,  
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,  
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,  
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,  
And let the bedclothes for a mortcloth drop  
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:  
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts  
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,  
About the life before I lived this life,  
And this life too, popes, cardinals, and priests,  
St. Praxed at his sermon on the mount,  
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,  
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,  
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,  
—Aha, *ELUCESCEBAT* quoth our friend?  
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!  
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.  
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope  
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?  
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's, quick,  
They glitter like your mother's for my soul. . . .

To paint men's ways, then, not to justify God's, seems to me Browning's business, would he but have minded it. Here, indeed, he provides another interesting contrast with Tennyson. For in Tennyson, as we have seen, the human figures matter less than the landscape, the Moated Grange moves us more than Mariana herself, many-fountained Ida than Oenone's tears: but in Browning the exact reverse is true—the world of nature matters less to him than human beings. It forms only the background of his portraits; indeed it often

becomes itself half-humanized. His hills lie like giants watching a hunted beast at bay, their chins upon their hands; his trees cluster round a lake as wild men round a sleeping girl, or gaze at the sun setting in the cloudy west, as a girl after her lover; his forests for an instant relax their old aloofness to make two human beings one:

A moment after, and *hands unseen*  
*Were hanging the night around us fast;*  
But we knew that a bar was broken between  
Life and life: we were mixed at last  
In spite of the mortal screen.

The forests had done it; there they stood;  
We had caught for a moment the powers at play:  
They had mingled us so, for once and good,  
Their work was done—we might go or stay,  
They relapsed to their ancient mood.

This difference provides an amusing contrast between the two poets; but why, then, does Browning seem inferior to Tennyson? The answer lies, I feel, partly in his style, and partly in his personality. Both writers were overfond of pointing morals; but Tennyson did at least try also to adorn his tales. He had an artistic conscience; too often Browning had not. Listen:

Never any more,  
While I live,  
Need I hope to see his face  
As before.  
Once his love grown chill,  
Mine may strive:  
Bitterly we re-embrace,  
Single still.  
Was it something said,  
Something done,  
Vexed him? was it touch of hand,

Turn of head?  
Strange! that very way  
Love begun:  
I as little understand  
Love's decay.

Or again:

No protesting, dearest!  
Hardly kisses even!  
Don't we both know how it ends?  
How the greenest leaf turns serest,  
Bluest outbreak—blankest heaven,  
Lovers—friends? . . .  
Where we plan our dwelling  
Glooms a graveyard surely!  
Headstone, footstone moss may drape,—  
Name, date, violets hide from spelling,—  
But, though corpses rot obscurely,  
Ghosts escape.

Ghosts! O breathing Beauty,  
Give my frank word pardon!  
What if I—somehow, somewhere—  
Pledged my soul to endless duty  
Many a time and oft? Be hard on  
Love—laid there?

'What is wrong with the music of that?' you say. Precisely, nothing: but what devil, then, could lead a man with this lyric gift to write such things as—

Nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul,  
where the consonants writhe in spitting heaps; or to pile up  
the vulgarity of—

Go get you manned by Manning, and new-manned  
By Newman, and mayhap wise-manned to boot  
By Wiseman, and we'll see or else we won't!

Dr. Jekyll was not more different from Mr. Hyde than the Browning who sings, from the Browning who roars. Why, why did he do it? It was partly sheer slovenliness; a man who could write a poem of fifty pages in double columns within seven weeks, and then print it from the first draft, leaving the punctuation to be corrected by a French friend, had the conscience of a pavement-artist. Secondly, Browning had also a natural impediment of thought which made it hard for him to construct even an intelligible telegram. He did not put himself in his reader's place, nor realize how difficult he was being. Of *Sordello*, that monument of obscurity, the reading of which after an illness reduced Douglas Jerrold to tears under the impression that he must really have lost his reason, Browning remarked to a friend that he had produced something 'clear at last.' Similarly even his love-letters to Elizabeth Barrett lose themselves in whirls of incoherence; and she had great difficulty in persuading him to explain to the public what he meant by his cryptic *Bells and Pomegranates*. This tendency was made worse by that Gothic love of the grotesque found also in other works contemporary with Browning's youth, such as *Pickwick* and *Sartor Resartus*. He is indeed one of those writers who treat language not as a musical instrument, needing delicacy no less than power in its handling, but rather as an iron bar which they are to twist and tangle in an exhibition of their prowess as professional strong men. As he himself says of his *Sordello*:

He left imagining to try the stuff  
That held the imaged thing, and—let it writhe  
Never so fiercely—scarcely allowed a tithe  
To reach the light—his language.

But there was also an element of affectation in this negligence, a suggestion that such an intellectual giant as Robert Browning was above mere airs and graces. 'In my youth,' he says in one of his letters, 'I wrote only musically, and after stopped all

that so effectually that I now catch myself grudging my men and women their half-pound, like a parish-overseer the bread-dole of his charge.' But why? There is a certain pose about that. So Plato said he saw the pride of Antisthenes the Cynic peeping through the holes in his rags. It is indeed as if the curse of Browning's Paracelsus, a similar mixture of true poet and charlatan, had fallen on Browning himself:

I cannot feed on beauty for the sake  
Of beauty only, nor can drink in balm  
From lovely objects for their loveliness. . . .  
I still must hoard and heap and class all truths  
With one ulterior purpose: I must know!

No doubt it succeeded for a time. He enabled persons who liked puzzles to suppose they liked poetry, and persons afraid of real thinking, to fancy themselves intellectual. And the thicker the incense rose from the Browning Societies, the more ragged and rugged his style became. It paid Browning then: since then it is Browning who pays. As Dryden said of Cowley: 'One of our late great poets is sunk in his reputation because he could never forgo any conceit which came in his way, but swept like a drag-net great and small.'

But this unpleasant element in his style has, I think, roots that go deeper down to an unpleasant element in Browning's personality. Extremely vital, he was also a little vulgar—with that assertiveness of the self-made man who thinks to brazen out lack of breeding by lack of manners. 'He flourished about,' said Tennyson; it was true. And again was all that masquerading as bishop or physician, woman or monster, which makes his works like some vast fancy-dress ball, partly an escape, one sometimes wonders, from seeing his own image too clearly in the glass? Was all that stamping and shouting half intended to drown a small voice that might have whispered in the ear of Dr. Pangloss less comfortable things? It is strange how

persistent character can be: Tennyson's first childish verse was, 'I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind'; Browning's,

Good people all, who wish to see  
A boy take physic, look at me.

The little Tennyson listens: the little Browning demands to be looked at. Turn to the farewell poems of their old age. *Crossing the Bar* and *Epilogue*: the same characteristics are still there. The old Tennyson listens to the soundless funeral-march of the outward sweeping tide; Browning calls the theatre of the world to take note how a Browning can live and die—

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,  
Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,\*  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake.

And so with a final flourish that hot-hearted little gentleman bounces out into the ironic silence of Eternity; leaving behind him, fortunately, a few human figures that still speak to us, a few lyrics that still sing.

What a creature of contradictions he seems to-day to look back on!—a poet who now sings like an angel, now talks like poor Poll; who could write magnificent dramatic monologues, and yet dramas (like *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*) that maunder beyond belief; whose psychology is at once so subtle and so superficial; who bared his soul to the world in a hundred transparent disguises and yet denounced, with a peck at Shakespeare, the mere notion that he could unlock his heart; who garbed himself in eccentricity, and yet fled at first sight from the coasts of Bohemia. One doubts at times his claim to be called a poet at all. Why did he not write in prose?

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\* As Hardy remarked on the passage: 'That was a lucky dreamlessness for Browning.'

Blown harshly keeps the trump its golden cry?

Tastes sweet the water with such specks of earth?

Often, alas, it does not; but we can separate good from bad. Indeed we must. And, after all, to the author of things like *The Lost Mistress*, *Love among the Ruins*, *A Toccata of Galuppi's*, *Porphyria's Lover*, *Childe Roland*, and *St. Martin's Summer*, much may be forgiven, even his complete works. For his poetry seems to me like the dry bed of an Alpine torrent down which a flood of vast, untamed energy has roared and foamed itself away, leaving a desolation of dead and bleaching stones; yet with here and there a narrow channel where a rush of waters still spins and dances, bright and living, towards its eternal goal.

#### COMMENT

Literature is the most complex of the arts because its medium is the most intricate and its potential subject matter is the largest and most diversified. No single technique for a whole and adequate criticism of a literary work has yet been evolved. Instead, there are many techniques and many kinds of critics, who emphasize different aspects of a work in attempting to determine the meaning and value of the whole.

Impressionistic criticism is the most widely practiced and the one we most frequently encounter. Most of the book, art, music, drama, and movie reviews in newspapers and in the popular magazines are of this type. In it the evaluation of the work is based upon the impression which the work makes upon the critic. In effect the critic says, "This is what I felt to such-and-such a degree; therefore, I think this is a good (or bad) work." Sensitive, imaginative, and flexible critics with trained and cultivated tastes have given us much fine impressionistic criticism. But less capable critics and critics hampered by midnight deadlines or the demands of editors that their reviews be as much a lively news "stories" as critical essays have written pieces woefully wrong in their evaluations. There is a tend-

ency today to distrust even the best of this criticism because it is so uncontrolled and subjective and because it tempts the critic to become arrogant, dogmatic, and excessively conservative—opposing new, experimental works that do not please him at once and that require him to overcome established habits of reading while doing some close analysis and hard study.

Formalistic criticism, on the other hand, is more controlled, objective, and, as a rule, applicable to experimental works. It is based upon the assumption that much of the excellence of a literary work is dependent upon the form—the structural relationships among the details—which may be examined objectively and discussed impersonally. Many formalist critics recognize what they believe to be an essential oneness of form and content. They insist that structural relationships be meaningful relationships (as for example, when two images are placed in dramatic and intrinsically interesting contrast within a poem and the critic demands that the contrast be not merely exciting for its own sake but relevant and appropriate to the subject, purpose, tone, and interpretation expressed in the poem). Hence, their study of form frequently requires them to make explanations of meaning which are useful to the reader (which is one reason why we usually find formalist criticism of difficult contemporary poetry and fiction more valuable, instructive, and convincing than other types). Some formalist critics, however, become so engaged with form in artificial separation from content that they tend to ignore such aspects of meaning as the truth, profundity, and significance of a work.

Another type, often called moralistic criticism, when the terms are conceived broadly, takes up just those aspects ignored by some formalist critics. Today moralistic criticism is infrequently written by professional critics because they dislike the censorship which it has so often practiced. But biographical criticism, which may sometimes be moralistic criticism in disguise, is very popular. Focusing attention upon the life and character of an author, this criticism undertakes to explain his work by his career and his environment. The actual evaluation of his work may be rather casually based upon several other techniques, but too often the critic becomes confused in his intentions and, instead of merely explaining the work in terms of the man, he goes on to evaluate it in terms of his evalua-



tion (by what are really non-literary standards) of the man—a procedure that is obviously unfair. Such abuses of biographical criticism should not, however, blind us to its frequent usefulness in establishing the meaning of a work.

Three different critical methods are represented in the essays of this subsection. The essay by Cleanth Brooks is an example of good formalistic criticism. That by Mark Twain is an amusing and very personal mixture of several techniques, impressionistic, formalistic, and, if we stretch the term a bit, moralistic (because of Twain's interest in the truth and significance of Cooper's work). The essay by F. L. Lucas is a provoking and brilliant combination of the impressionistic and biographical techniques. Its purpose is threefold: (a) to evaluate Browning's work as a whole in rather swift and glancing generalizations, (b) to account for the qualities of the work by examining the life and personality of the poet, and (c) to communicate the critic's impressions and evaluations through devices which will both suggest his own attitude toward the work and evoke a corresponding attitude in the reader with sufficient strength to persuade the reader to accept the critic's judgments.

✓ Cleanth Brooks rests his interpretation and evaluation of a poem by Robert Herrick upon evidence in the work itself, and for the most part he keeps himself and his own feelings well in the background. Lucas, on the other hand, must appeal to his own sensibility, and he is very prominent in the essay—~~at~~ at times almost more so than Browning. His attitude toward his subject is familiar, jaunty, and patronizing. He makes a show of humility ("For though our generation can criticize the Victorian poets, let us frankly admit that it cannot equal them"), but elsewhere the show is revealed as an ironic pretense. In suggesting his attitude and evaluation he uses many devices, but he relies particularly upon figures of speech and other images and, rather naturally, upon literary allusions.

One notably clever use of the allusion shows how effective Lucas's methods can be. In this, Browning is compared with God, apparently to God's disadvantage, since the poet cuts the grander figure. Browning "looked on the world and, behold, it was very good, with an even better one to follow." In *Genesis* 1:31 we read that on the sixth day of the creation "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." No mention is made of God's ex-

pecting a better one to follow. The picture of Browning, beaming upon the world with a more than divine satisfaction, is almost enough to make us close the *Collected Works* forever. In another place we are told that Browning began his preparations for a career as a poet by reading Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*. Though we may know that a poet can learn much from that excellent work—or from any dictionary, for that matter—we are likely to take a lofty view and dismiss both Browning and Johnson as pedants without a spark of the true fire between them. Dictionaries, indeed!

Many of the figures of speech skillfully belittle the poet. He and Tennyson are shown staggering about under the mantle of Elijah, a big man whose mantle more than covers two mere Victorian poets. Again Browning is seen ineptly digging in the reader's ribs with an "ill-pointed moral" (which takes some of the force out of Lucas's praise for Browning's handling of daggers, poisons, and deeds of violence), or, like a fussy, rather ill-natured chicken, giving a "peck at Shakespeare." His clumsiness is suggested when he is called "one of those writers who treat the language . . . as an iron bar which they are to twist and tangle in an exhibition of their prowess as professional strong men." (A show-off, too!) For the measure of praise he can allow Browning, Lucas again relies on images, such as those which conclude the essay, but these seem to suggest that Browning's poetry had virtues more or less by accident—that his rush of unchecked energy happened luckily to shine here and there in the course of its wild progress.

In the end, the picture given by the allusions, images, and other devices is vivid and clear, and the attitudes, if a little complicated, are definite. But is the essay fair to the man and the poetry? Certainly there is room for reasonable doubt. The student should compare his reactions to this essay with his reactions to those by Twain and Brooks. He will then be a shrewder critic of critics.

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## Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses

MARK TWAIN

*The Pathfinder* and *The Deerslayer* stand at the head of Cooper's novels as artistic creations. There are others of his works which contain parts as perfect as are to be found in these, and scenes even more thrilling. Not one can be compared with either of them as a finished whole.

The defects in both of these tales are comparatively slight. They were pure works of art.—PROF. LOUNSBURY.

The five tales reveal an extraordinary fullness of invention. . . . One of the very greatest characters in fiction, Natty Bumppo. . . .

The craft of the woodsman, the tricks of the trapper, all the delicate art of the forest, were familiar to Cooper from his youth up.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS.

Cooper is the greatest artist in the domain of romantic fiction yet produced by America.—WILKIE COLLINS.

IT SEEMS TO ME that it was far from right for the Professor of English Literature in Yale, the Professor of English Literature in Columbia, and Wilkie Collins to deliver opinions on Cooper's literature without having read some of it. It would have been much more decorous to keep silent and let persons talk who have read Cooper.

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From *How to Tell a Story and Other Essays*, by Mark Twain. Copyright, 1897, by Harper and Brothers. Copyright, 1925, by Clara Gabrilowitsch.

Cooper's art has some defects. In one place in *Deerslayer*, and in the restricted space of two thirds of a page, Cooper has scored 114 offenses against literary art out of a possible 115. It breaks the record.

There are nineteen rules governing literary art in the domain of romantic fiction—some say twenty-two. In *Deerslayer* Cooper violated eighteen of them. These eighteen require:

1. That a tale shall accomplish something and arrive somewhere. But the *Deerslayer* tale accomplishes nothing and arrives in air.

2. They require that the episodes of a tale shall be necessary parts of the tale, and shall help to develop it. But as the *Deerslayer* tale is not a tale, and accomplishes nothing and arrives nowhere, the episodes have no rightful place in the work, since there was nothing for them to develop.

3. They require that the personages in a tale shall be alive, except in the case of corpses, and that always the reader shall be able to tell the corpses from the others. But this detail has often been overlooked in the *Deerslayer* tale.

4. They require that the personages in a tale, both dead and alive, shall exhibit a sufficient excuse for being there. But this detail has also been overlooked in the *Deerslayer* tale.

5. They require that when the personages of a tale deal in conversation, the talk shall sound like human talk, and be talk such as human beings would be likely to talk in the given circumstances, and have a discoverable meaning, also a discoverable purpose, and a show of relevancy, and remain in the neighborhood of the subject in hand, and be interesting to the reader, and help out the tale, and stop when the people cannot think of anything more to say. But this requirement has been ignored from the beginning of the *Deerslayer* to the end of it.

6. They require that when the author describes the character of a personage in his tale, the conduct and conversation of that personage shall justify said description. But this law gets little or no attention in the *Deerslayer* tale, as Natty Bumppo's case will amply prove.

7. They require that when a personage talks like an illustrated, gilt-edged, tree-calf, hand-tooled, seven-dollar Friendship's Offering

in the beginning of a paragraph, he shall not talk like a negro minstrel in the end of it. But this rule is flung down and danced upon in the *Deerslayer* tale.

8. They require that crass stupidities shall not be played upon the reader as "the craft of the woodsman, the delicate art of the forest," by either the author or the people in the tale. But this rule is persistently violated in the *Deerslayer* tale.

9. They require that the personages of a tale shall confine themselves to possibilities and let miracles alone; or, if they venture a miracle, the author must so plausibly set it forth as to make it look possible and reasonable. But these rules are not respected in the *Deerslayer* tale.

10. They require that the author shall make the reader feel a deep interest in the personages of his tale and in their fate; and that he shall make the reader love the good people in the tale and hate the bad ones. But the reader of the *Deerslayer* tale dislikes the good people in it, is indifferent to the others, and wishes they would all get drowned together.

11. They require that the characters in a tale shall be so clearly defined that the reader can tell beforehand what each will do in a given emergency. But in the *Deerslayer* tale this rule is vacated.

In addition to these large rules there are some little ones. These require that the author shall

12. Say what he is proposing to say, not merely come near it.
13. Use the right word, not its second cousin.
14. Eschew surplusage.
15. Not omit necessary details.
16. Avoid slovenliness of form.
17. Use good grammar.
18. Employ a simple and straightforward style.

Even these seven are coldly and persistently violated in the *Deerslayer* tale.

Cooper's gift in the way of invention was not a rich endowment; but such as it was he liked to work it, he was pleased with the effects, and indeed he did some quite sweet things with it. In his little box of stage properties he kept six or eight

cunning devices, tricks, artifices for his savages and woodsmen to deceive and circumvent each other with, and he was never so happy as when he was working these innocent things and seeing them go. A favorite one was to make a moccasined person tread in the tracks of the moccasined enemy, and thus hide his own trail. Cooper wore out barrels and barrels of moccasins in working that trick. Another stage property that he pulled out of his box pretty frequently was his broken twig. He prized his broken twig above all the rest of his effects, and worked it the hardest. It is a restful chapter in any book of his when somebody doesn't step on a dry twig and alarm all the reds and whites for two hundred yards around. Every time a Cooper person is in peril, and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, he is sure to step on a dry twig. There may be a hundred handier things to step on, but that wouldn't satisfy Cooper. Cooper requires him to turn out and find a dry twig; and if he can't do it, go and borrow one. In fact, the Leatherstocking Series ought to have been called the Broken Twig Series.

I am sorry there is not room to put in a few dozen instances of the delicate art of the forest, as practiced by Natty Bumppo and some of the other Cooperian experts. Perhaps we may venture two or three samples. Cooper was a sailor—a naval officer; yet he gravely tells us how a vessel, driving towards a lee shore in a gale, is steered for a particular spot by her skipper because he knows of an *undertow* there which will hold her back against the gale and save her. For just pure woodcraft, or sailorcraft, or whatever it is, isn't that neat? For several years Cooper was daily in the society of artillery, and he ought to have noticed that when a cannon-ball strikes the ground it either buries itself or skips a hundred feet or so; skips again a hundred feet or so—and so on, till finally it gets tired and rolls. Now in one place he loses some "females"—as he always calls women—in the edge of a wood near a plain at night in a fog, on purpose to give Bumppo a chance to show

off the delicate art of the forest before the reader. These mislaid people are hunting for a fort. They hear a cannon-blast, and a cannon-ball presently comes rolling into the wood and stops at their feet. To the females this suggests nothing. The case is very different with the admirable Bumppo. I wish I may never know peace again if he doesn't strike out promptly and *follow the track* of that cannon-ball across the plain through the dense fog and find the fort. Isn't it a daisy? If Cooper had any real knowledge of Nature's ways of doing things, he had a most delicate art in concealing the fact. For instance: one of his acute Indian experts, Chingachgook (pronounced Chicago, I think) has lost the trail of a person he is tracking through the forest. Apparently that trail is hopelessly lost. Neither you nor I could ever have guessed out the way to find it. It was very different with Chicago. Chicago was not stumped for long. He turned a running stream out of its course, and there, in the slush in its old bed, were that person's moccasin-tracks. The current did not wash them away, as it would have done in all other like cases—no, even the eternal laws of Nature have to vacate when Cooper wants to put up a delicate job of woodcraft on the reader.

We must be a little wary when Brander Matthews tells us that Cooper's books "reveal an extraordinary fullness of invention." As a rule, I am quite willing to accept Brander Matthews' literary judgments and applaud his lucid and graceful phrasing of them; but that particular statement needs to be taken with a few tons of salt. Bless your heart, Cooper hadn't any more invention than a horse; and I don't mean a high-class horse, either; I mean a clotheshorse. It would be very difficult to find a really clever "situation" in Cooper's books, and still more difficult to find one of any kind which he has failed to render absurd by his handling of it. Look at the episodes of "the caves"; and at the celebrated scuffle between Maqua and those others on the tableland a few days later; and at Hurry Harry's queer water transit from the castle to

the ark; and at Deerslayer's half-hour with his first corpse, and at the quarrel between Hurry Harry and Deerslayer later; and at— But choose for yourself; you can't go amiss.

If Cooper had been an observer his inventive faculty would have worked better; not more interestingly, but more rationally, more plausibly. Cooper's proudest creations in the way of "situations" suffer noticeably from the absence of the observer's protecting gift. Cooper's eye was splendidly inaccurate. Cooper seldom saw anything correctly. He saw nearly all things as through a glass eye, darkly. Of course a man who cannot see the commonest little every-day matters accurately is working at a disadvantage when he is constructing a "situation." In the *Deerslayer* tale Cooper has a stream which is fifty feet wide where it flows out of a lake; it presently narrows to twenty as it meanders along for no given reason, and yet when a stream acts like that it ought to be required to explain itself. Fourteen pages later the width of the brook's outlet from the lake has suddenly shrunk thirty feet, and become "the narrowest part of the stream." This shrinkage is not accounted for. The stream has bends in it, a sure indication that it has alluvial banks and cuts them; yet these bends are only thirty and fifty feet long. If Cooper had been a nice and punctilious observer he would have noticed that the bends were oftener nine hundred feet long than short of it. . . .

The reader will find some examples of Cooper's high talent for inaccurate observation in the account of the shooting-match in *The Pathfinder*.

"A common wrought nail was driven lightly into the target, its head having been first touched with paint."

The color of the paint is not stated—an important omission, but Cooper deals freely in important omissions. No, after all, it was not an important omission; for this nail-head is *a hundred yards from* the marksmen, and could not be seen by them at that distance, no matter what its color might be. How far can the best eyes see a common house-fly? A hundred yards?



It is quite impossible. Very well; eyes that cannot see a house-fly that is a hundred yards away cannot see an ordinary nail-head at that distance, for the size of the two objects is the same. It takes a keen eye to see a fly or a nail-head at fifty yards—one hundred and fifty feet. Can the reader do it?

The nail was lightly driven, its head painted, and game called. Then the Cooper miracles began. The bullet of the first marksman chipped an edge of the nail-head; the next man's bullet drove the nail a little way into the target—and removed all the paint. Haven't the miracles gone far enough now? Not to suit Cooper; for the purpose of this whole scheme is to show off his prodigy, Deerslayer-Hawkeye-Long-Rifle-Leather-Stocking-Pathfinder-Bumppo before the ladies.

"'Be all ready to clench it, boys!' cried out Pathfinder, stepping into his friend's tracks the instant they were vacant. 'Never mind a new nail; I can see that, though the paint is gone, and what I can see I can hit at a hundred yards, though it were only a mosquito's eye. Be ready to clench!'

"The rifle cracked, the bullet sped its way, and the head of the nail was buried in the wood, covered by the pieces of flattened lead."

There, you see, is a man who could hunt flies with a rifle, and command a ducal salary in a Wild West show today if we had him back with us.

The recorded feat is certainly surprising just as it stands; but it is not surprising enough for Cooper. Cooper adds a touch. He has made Pathfinder do this miracle with another man's rifle; and not only that, but Pathfinder did not even have the advantage of loading it himself. He had everything against him and yet he made the impossible shot; and not only made it, but did it with absolute confidence, saying, "Be ready to clench." Now a person like that would have undertaken that same feat with a brickbat, and with Cooper to help he would have achieved it, too.

Pathfinder showed off handsomely that day before the ladies.

His very first feat was a thing which no Wild West show can touch. He was standing with the group of marksmen, observing—a hundred yards from the target, mind; one Jasper raised his rifle and drove the center of the bull's-eye. Then the Quartermaster fired. The target exhibited no result this time. There was a laugh. "It's a dead miss," said Major Lundie. Pathfinder waited an impressive moment or two; then said, in that calm, indifferent, know-it-all way of his, "No, Major, he has covered Jasper's bullet, as will be seen if anyone will take the trouble to examine the target."

Wasn't it remarkable! How *could* he see that little pellet fly through the air and enter that distant bullet-hole? Yet that is what he did; for nothing is impossible to a Cooper person. Did any of those people have any deep-seated doubts about this thing? No; for that would imply sanity, and these were all Cooper people.

"The respect for Pathfinder's skill and for his *quickness and accuracy of sight* [the italics are mine] was so profound and general, that the instant he made this declaration the spectators began to distrust their own opinions, and a dozen rushed to the target in order to ascertain the fact. There, sure enough, it was found that the Quartermaster's bullet had gone through the hole made by Jasper's, and that, too, so accurately as to require a minute examination to be certain of the circumstance, which, however, was soon clearly established by discovering one bullet over the other in the stump against which the target was placed."

They made a "minute" examination; but never mind, how could they know that there were two bullets in that hole without digging the latest one out? For neither probe nor eyesight could prove the presence of any more than one bullet. Did they dig? No; as we shall see. It is the Pathfinder's turn now; he steps out before the ladies, takes aim, and fires.

But, alas! here is a disappointment; an incredible, an unimaginable disappointment—for the target's aspect is un-

changed; there is nothing there but that same old bullet-hole!

"'If one dared to hint at such a thing,' cried Major Duncan, 'I should say that the Pathfinder has also missed the target!'"

As nobody had missed it yet, the "also" was not necessary; but never mind about that, for the Pathfinder is going to speak.

"'No, no, Major,' said he, confidently, 'that *would* be a risky declaration. I didn't load the piece, and can't say what was in it; but if it was lead, you will find the bullet driving down those of the Quartermaster and Jasper, else is not my name Pathfinder.'

"A shout from the target announced the truth of this assertion."

Is the miracle sufficient as it stands? Not for Cooper. The Pathfinder speaks again, as he "now slowly advances towards the stage occupied by the females":

"'That's not all, boys, that's not all; if you find the target touched at all, I'll own to a miss. The Quartermaster cut the wood, but you'll find no wood cut by that last messenger.'"

The miracle is at last complete. He knew—doubtless *saw*—at the distance of a hundred yards—that his bullet had passed into the hole *without fraying the edges*. There were now three bullets in that one hole—three bullets embedded processionally in the body of the stump back of the target. Everybody knew this—somehow or other—and yet nobody had dug any of them out to make sure. Cooper is not a close observer, but he is interesting. He is certainly always that, no matter what happens. And he is more interesting when he is not noticing what he is about than when he is. This is a considerable merit.

The conversations in the Cooper books have a curious sound in our modern ears. To believe that such talk really ever came out of people's mouths would be to believe that there was a time when time was of no value to a person who thought he had something to say; when it was the custom to spread a two-minute remark out to ten; when a man's mouth was a rolling-

mill, and busied itself all day long in turning four-foot pigs of thought into thirty-foot bars of conversational railroad iron by attenuation; when subjects were seldom faithfully stuck to, but the talk wandered all around and arrived nowhere; when conversations consisted mainly of irrelevancies, with here and there a relevancy, a relevancy with an embarrassed look, as not being able to explain how it got there.

Cooper was certainly not a master in the construction of dialogue. Inaccurate observation defeated him here as it defeated him in so many other enterprises of his. He even failed to notice that the man who talks corrupt English six days in the week must and will talk it on the seventh, and can't help himself. In the *Deerslayer* story he lets Deerslayer talk the showiest kind of book-talk sometimes, and at other times the basest of base dialects. For instance, when someone asks him if he has a sweetheart, and if so, where she abides, this is his majestic answer:

" 'She's in the forest—hanging from the boughs of the trees, in a soft rain—in the dew on the open grass—the clouds that float about in the blue heavens—the birds that sing in the woods—the sweet springs where I slake my thirst—and in all the other glorious gifts that come from God's Providence!' "

And he preceded that, a little before, with this:

" 'It consarns me as all things that touches a fri'nd consarns a fri'nd.' "

And this is another of his remarks.

" 'If I was Injin born, now, I might tell of this, or carry in the scalp and boast of the expl'ite afore the whole tribe; or if my inimy had only been a bear' "—and so on. . . .

Cooper's word-sense was singularly dull. When a person has a poor ear for music he will flat and sharp right along without knowing it. He keeps near the tune, but it is *not* the tune. When a person has a poor ear for words, the result is a literary flattening and sharpening; you perceive what he is intending to say, but you also perceive that he doesn't *say* it. This is Cooper. He

was not a word-musician. His ear was satisfied with the *approximate* word. I will furnish some circumstantial evidence in support of this charge. My instances are gathered from half-a-dozen pages of the tale called *Deerslayer*. He uses *verbal*, for *oral*; *precision*, for *facility*; *phenomena*, for *marvels*; *necessary*, for *predetermined*; *unsophisticated*, for *primitive*; *preparation*, for *expectancy*; *rebuked*, for *subdued*; *dependent on*, for *resulting from*; *fact*, for *condition*; *fact*, for *conjecture*; *precaution*, for *caution*; *explain*, for *determine*; *mortified*, for *disappointed*; *meretricious*, for *factitious*; *materially*, for *considerably*; *decreasing*, for *deepening*; *increasing*, for *disappearing*; *embedded*, for *enclosed*; *treacherous*, for *hostile*; *stood*, for *stooped*; *softened*, for *replaced*; *rejoined*, for *remarked*; *situation*, for *condition*; *different*, for *differing*; *insensible*, for *insentient*; *brevity*, for *celerity*; *distrusted*, for *suspicious*; *mental imbecility*, for *imbecility*; *eyes*, for *sight*; *counteracting*, for *opposing*; *funeral obsequies*, for *obsequies*.

There have been daring people in the world who claimed that Cooper could write English, but they are all dead now—all dead but Lounsbury. I don't remember that Lounsbury makes the claim in so many words, still he makes it, for he says that *Deerslayer* is a "pure work of art." Pure, in that connection, means faultless—faultless in all details—and language is a detail. If Mr. Lounsbury had only compared Cooper's English with the English which he writes himself—but it is plain that he didn't; and so it is likely that he imagines until this day that Cooper's is as clean and compact as his own. Now I feel sure, deep down in my heart, that Cooper wrote about the poorest English that exists in our language, and that the English of *Deerslayer* is the very worst that even Cooper ever wrote.

I may be mistaken, but it does seem to me that *Deerslayer* is not a work of art in any sense; it does seem to me that it is destitute of every detail that goes to the making of a work of art; in truth, it seems to me that *Deerslayer* is just simply a literary *delirium tremens*.

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A work of art? It has no invention; it has no order, system, sequence, or result; it has no lifelikeness, no thrill, no stir, no seeming of reality; its characters are confusedly drawn, and by their acts and words they prove that they are not the sort of people the author claims that they are; its humor is pathetic; its pathos is funny; its conversations are—oh! indescribable; its love-scenes odious; its English a crime against the language.

Counting these out, what is left is Art. I think we must all admit that.

## What Does Poetry Communicate?

CLEANTH BROOKS

THE QUESTION of what poetry communicates, if anything, has been largely forced upon us by the advent of "modern" poetry. Some of that poetry is admittedly highly difficult—a very great deal of it is bound to *appear* difficult to the reader of conventional reading habits, even in spite of the fact—actually, in many cases, *because* of the fact—that he is a professor of literature.

For this reason, the difficult moderns are often represented as untraditional and generally irresponsible. (The War, incidentally, has encouraged the tendency: critics who ought to know better lend themselves to the popular plea that we should go back to the good old days when a poet meant what he said and there was no nonsense about it.)

The question, however, allows only one honest answer: modern poetry (if it is really poetry, and, at its best, it is really poetry) communicates whatever any other poetry communicates. The fact is that the question is badly asked. What does traditional poetry communicate? What does a poem like Herrick's "Corinna's going a-Maying"\* communicate? The example is a fair one: the poem has been long praised, and it is not noted for its difficulty.

The textbook answer is easy: the poem is a statement of

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\* The text of this poem will be found in the Appendix, page 613.

the *carpe diem* theme. So it is, of course. But what does the poem do with the theme—specifically: Does the poet accept the theme? How seriously does he accept it? Within what context? etc., etc. These are questions of the first importance, a point that becomes obvious when we come to deal with such a matter as the following: after describing the joys of the May-day celebration, the poet prefaces his final invitation to Corinna to accept these joys by referring to them as “the harmlesse follie of the time.” Unless we are absent-mindedly dictating a stock answer to an indifferent freshman, we shall certainly feel constrained to go further in describing what the poem “says.”

Well, let us try again. Herrick's poem says that the celebration of nature is a beautiful but harmless folly, and his invitation to Corinna, thus, is merely playful, not serious. The Anglican parson is merely pretending for the moment that he is Catullus and that his Corinna is a pagan nymph. The poem is a pretense, a masquerade.

But there are the closing lines of the poem:

*Our life is short; and our dayes run  
As fast away as do's the Sunne:  
And as a vapour, or a drop of raine  
Once lost, can ne'er be found againe:  
So when or you or I are made  
A fable, song, or fleeting shade;  
All love, all liking, all delight  
Lies drown'd with us in endlesse night.  
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying;  
Come, my Corinna, come, let's goe a-Maying.*

Obviously, there is a sense in which the invitation is thoroughly serious.

Confronted with this apparent contradiction, we can conclude, if we like, that Herrick is confused; or, softening the censure, we can explain that he was concerned only with providing some sort of framework for a description of the Devonshire



spring. But if Herrick is confused about what he is saying in the poem, he behaves very strangely for a man in that plight. Far from being unconscious of the contradictory elements in the poem, he quite obviously has them in mind. Indeed, he actually takes pains to stress the clash between the Christian and pagan world views; or, rather, while celebrating the pagan view, he refuses to suppress references to the Christian. For instance, for all the dew-besprinkled description of the morning, he makes the ominous, unpagan word "sin" run throughout the poem. While the flowers are rejoicing and the birds are singing their hymns of praise, it is a "sin" and a "profanation" for Corinna to remain within doors. In the second stanza, the clash between paganism and Christianity becomes quite explicit: Corinna is to be "briefe in praying:/Few Beads are best" on this morning which is dedicated to the worship of the nature god. And in the third stanza, paganism becomes frankly triumphant. Corinna is to

*. . . sin no more, as we have done, by staying. . . .*

Moreover, a great deal that is usually glossed over as decoration or atmosphere in this poem is actually used by the poet to point up this same conflict. Herrick persists (with a shrewdness worthy of Sir James Frazer) in seeing the May-day rites as religious rites, though, of course, those of a pagan religion. The flowers, like worshippers, bow to the east; the birds sing "Mattens" and "Hymnes"; and the village itself, bedecked with greenery, becomes a cluster of pagan temples:

*Devotion gives each House a Bough,  
Or Branch: Each Porch, each doore, ere this,  
An Arke a Tabernacle is. . . .*

The religious terms—"devotion," "ark," "tabernacle"—appear insistently. Corinna is actually being reproached for being late to church—the church of nature. The village itself has become

a grove, subject to the laws of nature. One remembers that the original sense of "pagan" was "country-dweller" because the worship of the old gods and goddesses persisted longest there. On this May morning, the country has come into the village to claim it, at least on this one day, for its own. Symbolically, the town has disappeared and its mores are superseded.

I cannot see how we can avoid admitting that all this is communicated by the poem. Here it is in the poem. And its repercussions on the theme (if we still want to view the poem as a communication of a theme) are important. Among other things, they qualify the theme thus: the poem is obviously not a brief for the acceptance of the pagan ethic so much as it is a statement that the claims of the pagan ethic—however much they may be overlaid—exist, and on occasion emerge, as on this day.

The description of Corinna herself supplies another important qualification of the theme. The poet suggests that she properly falls under the dominion of nature as do the flowers and birds and trees. Notice the opening of the second stanza:

*Rise; and put on your Foliage. . . .*

And this suggestion that she is a part of nature, like a plant, is reinforced throughout the poem. The trees drenched in dew will shake down dew-drops on her hair, accepting her as a companion and equal. Her human companions, the boys and girls of the village, likewise are plants—

*There's not a budding Boy, or Girle, this day,  
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.*

Indeed, as we go through the first three stanzas of the poem, the old relationships gradually dissolve: the street itself turns into a park, and the boys and girls returning with their arms loaded with branches of white-thorn, merge into the plants themselves. Corinna, like them, is subject to nature, and to the

claims of nature; and the season of springtime cannot, and ought not, to be denied. Not to respond is to "sin" against nature itself.

All this is "communicated" by the poem, and must be taken into account when we attempt to state what the poem "says." No theory of communication can deny that this is part of what the poem communicates, however awkwardly a theory of communication may be put to it to handle the problem.

We have still not attempted to resolve the conflict between the Christian and pagan attitudes in the poem, though the qualification of each of them, as Herrick qualifies each in the poem, may make it easier to discover possible resolutions which would have appealed to Herrick the Anglican parson who lived so much of his life in Devonshire and apparently took so much interest, not only in the pagan literature of Rome and Greece, but in the native English survivals of the old Fertility cults.

Something of the nature of the poet's reconciliation of the conflicting claims of paganism and Christianity—and this, again, is part of what the poem communicates—is foreshadowed in the fourth stanza. The paganism with which the poem is concerned is clearly not an abstract and doctrinaire paganism. It comes to terms with the authoritative Christian mores, casually and without undue thought about the conflict—at least the paganism in action does: the village boys and the girls with their grass-strained gowns, coming to the priest to receive the blessing of the church.

*And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted Troth,  
And chose then Priest, ere we can cast off sloth. . . .*

After the poet's teasing play between attitudes in the first three stanzas, we are apparently approaching some kind of viable relation between them in this most realistic stanza of the poem with its

*Many a jest told of the Keyes betraying  
This night, and Locks pickt. . . .*

The explicit resolution, of course, is achieved, with a change of tone, in the last stanza, with its

*Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime;  
And take the harmlesse follie of the time.  
We shall grow old apace, and die. . . .*

I shall not try to indicate in detail what the resolution is. Here one must refer the reader to the poem itself. Yet one can venture to suggest the tone. The tone would be something like this: All right, let's be serious. Dismiss my pagan argument as folly. Still, in a sense, we are a part of nature, and are subject to its claims, and participate in its beauty. Whatever may be true in reality of the life of the soul, the body does decay, and unless we make haste to catch some part of that joy and beauty, that beauty—whatever else may be true—is lost.

If my clumsy paraphrase possesses any part of the truth, then this is still another thing which the poem communicates, though I shall hardly be able to "prove" it. As a matter of fact, I do not care to insist upon this or any other paraphrase. Indeed it is just because I am suspicious of such necessarily abstract paraphrases that I think our initial question, "What does the poem communicate?" is badly asked. It is not that the poem communicates nothing. Precisely the contrary. The poem communicates so much and communicates it so richly and with such delicate qualifications that the thing communicated is mauled and distorted if we attempt to convey it by any vehicle less subtle than that of the poem itself.

This general point is reinforced if we consider the function of particular words and phrases within the poem. For instance, consider

*Our life is short, and our dayes run  
As fast away as do's the Sunne:*

*And as a vapour, or a drop of raine  
Once lost, can ne'er be found againe. . . .*

Why does the rain-drop metaphor work so powerfully? It is hardly because the metaphor is startlingly novel. Surely one important reason for its power is the fact that the poet has filled the first two stanzas of his poem with references to the dew. And the drops of dew have come to stand as a symbol of the spring and early dawn and of the youth of the lovers themselves. The dew-drops are the free gifts of nature, spangling every herb and tree; they sparkle in the early light like something precious, like gems; they are the appropriate decoration for the girl; but they will not last—Corinna must hasten to enjoy them if she is to enjoy them at all. Thus, in the context of the poem they become a symbol heavily charged with meanings which no dictionary can be expected to give. When the symbol is revived at the end of the poem, even though in somewhat different guise, the effect is powerful; for the poet has made the little globule of moisture come to stand for the brief beauty of youth. And this too is part of what the poem says, though it is said indirectly, and the dull or lazy reader will not realize that it has been said at all.

The principle of rich indirection applies even to the individual word. Consider

*Then while time serves, and we are but decaying;  
Come, my Corinna, come, let's goe a-Maying.*

"While time serves" means loosely "while there is yet time," but in the full context of the poem it also means "while time serves us," while time is still servant, not master—before we are mastered by time. Again, mere recourse to the dictionary will not give us this powerful second meaning. The poet is exploiting the potentialities of language—indeed, as all poets must do, he is remaking language.

To sum up: our examination of the poem has not resulted in our locating an idea or set of ideas which the poet has com-

municated with certain appropriate decorations. Rather, our examination has carried us further and further into the poem itself in a process of exploration. As we have made this exploration, it has become more and more clear that the poem is not the only linguistic vehicle which conveys the thing communicated most "poetically," but that it is also the sole linguistic vehicle which conveys the things communicated accurately. In fact, if we are to speak exactly, the poem itself is the *only* medium that communicates the particular "what" that is communicated. The conventional theories of communication offer no easy solution to our problem of meanings: we emerge with nothing more enlightening than this graceless bit of tautology: the poem says what the poem says.

There is a further point that comes out of our examination: our examination tends to suggest that not only our reading of the poem is a process of exploration, but that Herrick's process of making the poem was probably a process of exploration too. To say that Herrick "communicates" certain matters to the reader tends to falsify the real situation. The old description of the poet was better and less dangerous: the poet is a maker, not a communicator. He explores, consolidates, and "forms" the total experience that is the poem. I do not mean that he fashions a replica of his particular experience of a certain May morning like a detective making a moulage of a footprint in wet clay. But rather, out of the experiences of many May mornings, and out of his experience of Catullus, and possibly out of a hundred other experiences, he fashions, probably through a process akin to exploration, the total experience which is the poem.

This experience is *communicable*, partially so, at least. If we are willing to use imaginative understanding, we can come to know the poem as an object—we can share in the experience. But the poet is most truthfully described as a *poietes* or maker, not as an expositor or communicator. I do not mean to split hairs. It is doubtless possible to elaborate a theory of com-

munication which will adequately cover these points. I believe that I. A. Richards, if I understand him correctly, has attempted to qualify his theory in precisely this way. At any rate, the net effect of his criticism has been to emphasize the need of a more careful reading of poetry and to regard the poem as an organic thing.

But most proponents of poetry as communication have been less discerning, and have used this view of poetry to damn the modern poets. I refer to such typical critics as Max Eastman and F. L. Lucas. But perhaps the most hard-bitten and vindictive of all the adherents of the theory is a man to whom the phrase "theory of communication" may seem novel and unfamiliar: I mean the average English professor. In one form or another, whether in a conception which makes poetry a romantic raid on the absolute, or in a conception of more didactic persuasion which makes poetry an instrument of edification, some form of the theory of communication is to be found deeply embedded in the average teacher's doctrine of poetry. In many contexts it does little or no harm; but it can emerge to becloud the issues thoroughly when one confronts poetry which is unfamiliar or difficult.

Much modern poetry is difficult. Some of it may be difficult because the poet is snobbish and definitely wants to restrict his audience, though this is a strange vanity and much rarer than Mr. Eastman would have us think. Some modern poetry is difficult because it is bad—the total experience remains chaotic and incoherent because the poet could not master his material and give it a form. Some modern poetry is difficult because of the special problems of our civilization. But a great deal of modern poetry is difficult for the reader simply because so few people, relatively speaking, are accustomed to reading *poetry as poetry*. The theory of communication throws the burden of proof upon the poet, overwhelmingly and at once. The reader says to the poet: Here I am; it's your job to "get it across" to

me—when he ought to be assuming the burden of proof himself.

Now the modern poet has, for better or worse, thrown the weight of the responsibility upon the reader. The reader must be on the alert for shifts of tone, for ironic statement, for suggestion rather than direct statement. He must be prepared to accept a method of indirection. He is further expected to be reasonably well acquainted with the general tradition—literary, political, philosophical, for he is reading a poet who comes at the end of a long tradition and who can hardly be expected to write honestly and with full integrity and yet ignore this fact. But the difficulties are not insuperable, and most of them can be justified in principle as the natural results of the poet's employment of his characteristic methods. For example, surely there can be no objection to the poet's placing emphasis on methods characteristic of poetry—the use of symbol rather than abstraction, of suggestion rather than explicit pronouncement, of metaphor rather than direct statement.

In stressing such methods, it is true, the modern poet has not produced a poetry which easily yields manageable abstractions in the way that some of the older poetry seems to do. But this is scarcely a conclusion that is flattering to the antagonists of modern poetry. What does an "older poem" like "Corinna's going a-Maying" say? What does this poem communicate? If we are content with the answer that the poem says that we should enjoy youth before youth fades, and if we are willing to write off everything else in the poem as "decoration," then we can properly censure Eliot or Auden or Tate for not making poems so easily tagged. But in that case we are not interested in poetry; we are interested in tags. Actually, in a few years, when time has wrought its softening changes, and familiarity has subdued the modern poet's frightful mien, and when the tags have been obligingly supplied, we may even come to terms with our difficult moderns.



## POSTSCRIPT:

In a recent essay, Arthur Mizener connects the reference to "the god unshorn" in the first line of Herrick's poem with a comparable passage in Spenser.

*At last the golden Orientall gate  
Of greatest heauen gan to open faire,  
And Phoebus fresh, a bridegrome to his mate,  
Came dauncing foith, shaking his deawie haire:  
And hurled his glistring beames through gloomy aire.  
Which when the wakeful Elf perceiu'd streight way  
He started up, and did him selfe arraye:  
In sun-bright armes, and battailous array:  
For with that Pagan proud he combat will that day.*

"There is," Mizener comments, "a nice fusion, if, to our tastes, not a complete ordering of Pagan and Christian elements here. Phoebus, fresh as the Psalmist's bridegroom, comes dancing (with, I suppose, both a pagan grace and the rejoicing of a strong man to run a race) from the gate of heaven which is actually felt simultaneously in terms of the clear and lovely classical fantasy on nature and in terms of a Christian vision of the metaphysical source of the meaning of life." And a little later in the essay Mizener goes on to say "Certainly the Red Cross Knight's 'sun-bright armes' ('the armour of a Christian man') are intended to be compared to the 'glistring beames' with which Apollo attacks the darkness, as the virtuous and enlightened Elf is about to attack the darkly evil Pagan. And it is tempting to suppose that since the strength of Holiness is that of the sun, of 'the god unshorn,' the references to Apollo's hair and to the bridegroom's energy are also significant."

Later still in his essay, Mizener quotes the following passage from *Paradise Lost*:

*. . . nor appear'd  
Less than Arch Angel ruin'd, and th' excess  
Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n*

*Looks through the Horizontal misty Air  
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon  
In dim Eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the Nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes Monarchs.*

"By the first of these sun comparisons," Mizener points out, "the archangel ruined is the sun deprived of its power to dispel with its beams the foul mists of winter and make the earth fruitful once more; the fallen angel is Apollo, shorn. . . . Nor is it easy to believe the epithet insignificant here; with all his learning Milton must certainly have known how common a symbol of virility the hair was among the Greeks. Herrick, a much less learned man, knew this, as his use of it in 'Corinna's going a-Maying' clearly shows:

*Get up, get up, for shame, the Blooming Morn  
Upon her wings presents the god unshorne."*

It is unfair, of course, to quote from Mizener's essay without reference to his general thesis, and to quote only those bits of it which bear directly upon the dawn passage in Herrick's poem. (The essay, by the way, should be read in entirety and for its own sake: "Some Notes on the Nature of English Poetry," *The Sewanee Review*, Winter, 1943.) Even so, the passage quoted may be of value in demonstrating to the skeptical reader, suspicious that too much is being "read into" Herrick's innocent poem, how other poets of the same general period used the sun figure.

In Herrick's poem, "the god unshorne" is obviously the prepotent bridegroom of nature, the fertility god himself, toward whom the plants bow in adoration and whose day is now to be celebrated.

### 3. ESSAYS OF PERSUASION: ARGUMENT AND LOGIC

#### *Science in General Education*

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

WE ARE BECOMING aware that in adjusting a curriculum, it is not sufficient to agree that some specified subject should be taught. We have to ask many questions and to make many experiments before we can determine its best relation to the whole body of educational influences which are to mould the pupil.

In the first place it is necessary to keep before our minds that nine-tenths of the pupil's time is, and must be, occupied in the apprehension of a succession of details—it may be facts of history, it may be the translation of a definite paragraph of Thucydides, it may be the observable effects in some definite physical experiment. You cannot learn Science, *passim*; what you do learn in some definite hour of work is perhaps the effect on the temperature of a given weight of boiling water obtained by dropping into it a given weight of lead at another definite temperature, or some analogous detailed set of facts. It is true that all teaching has its rhetorical moments when attention is directed to aesthetic values or to momentous issues. But practical schoolmasters will tell you that the main struc-

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From *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, by Alfred North Whitehead. Published by Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

ture of successful education is formed out of the accurate accomplishment of a succession of detailed tasks. It is necessary to enforce this point at the very beginning of discussion, and to keep it in mind throughout, because the enthusiasm of reformers so naturally dwells on what we may term "the rhetoric of education."

Our second step in thought must be to envisage the principles which should govern the arrangement of the detailed lessons in the subject. An educational cynic will tell you that it does not make much difference what you teach the pupils: they are bound to forget it all when they leave school; the one important thing is, to get the children into the habit of concentrating their thoughts, of applying their minds to definite tasks, and of doing what they are told. In fact, according to this school of thought, discipline, mental and physical, is the final benefit of education, and the content of the ideas is practically valueless. An exception is made for pupils of unusual ability or of unusual twist of interest. I conceive this summary solution of the educational problem to be based on an entirely false psychology, and to be in disagreement with experience. It depends for its plausibility on the erroneous analogy of the intellectual organism with some kind of mechanical instrument such as a knife, which you first sharpen on a hard stone, and then set to cut a number of different things quite disconnected with the stone and the process of sharpening. The other sources of the theory are the disillusionment of tired teachers, and the trenchant judgments of those who will not give the time to think out a complex question. But as this opinion is not likely to be largely represented among members of the Congress, further contemplation of it is unnecessary. In considering the general principles which are to govern our selection of details, we must remember that we are concerned with general education. Accordingly we must be careful to avoid conceiving science either in quantity or quality as it would be presented to the specialists in that subject. We must not assume

ample time or unusual scientific ability. Also in recent years the congestion of subjects in the curriculum, combined with the opposing claims of specialism, has led practically all English Schools and the Board of Education to adopt certain principles regulating the relations between general education and special subjects. Our discussion must take these for granted, if we wish to be practical. Education up to the age of sixteen, or sixteen-and-a-half, is to be dominated by the claims of general education, and extended attention to any special subject is to be limited by the claims of the whole balanced curriculum. In the case of a pupil of any reasonable ability there will be time for some specialism; but the ruling principle is, that where the claims of the two clash, the specialism is to be sacrificed to the general education. But after the age of sixteen, the position is reversed. The pupil is expected to devote the larger proportion of his time to some adequate special subject, such as classics, science, mathematics, or history, and the remaining portion to suitably contrasted subsidiary subjects, such as modern languages for a scientist or a mathematician. In other words, before sixteen the special subject is subsidiary to the general education, and after sixteen the general education is subsidiary to the special subject. Accordingly our discussion divides into two sections, namely, science in general education before the age of sixteen, and after the age of sixteen. The second division may also be taken to cover the University stage. This principle of a preliminary general education has set to educationalists a new problem which has not as yet been adequately worked on in any subject. Indeed it is only just dawning on responsible people in its full urgency. But on its solution depends the success of that modern system of education to which we are now committed.

The problem is this: In all schools, with negligible exceptions, the general education has to be arranged with practical uniformity for the school as a whole. In the first place it is not very certain who among the pupils are the future scientists,

who the future classical scholars, or who are the future historians. For the greater number, the desirable differentiation will only gradually disclose itself. Secondly, we may not assume that the majority of boys or girls in secondary schools will remain at school after the age of seventeen, and thus continue any portion of the general education after the first period. Accordingly for both these reasons, the preliminary general training in each subject should form a self-contained course, finding its justification in what it has done for the pupil at its termination. If it is not justified then, it never will be, since at this point, in the vast majority of instances, the formal study of the subject ends.

If we examine the cause of the educational dissatisfaction at the end of the last and at the beginning of this century, we shall find that it centres round the fact that the subjects in the curriculum were taught as incomplete fragments. The children were taught their elementary mathematics exactly as though they were to proceed in later years to take their degrees as high wranglers. Of course most of them collapsed at the first stage; and nobody—least of all the children—knew why they had been taught just that selection of meaningless elaborate preliminaries. Anyhow, as they soon forgot it all, it did not seem much to matter. The same criticism applied to the classics, and to other subjects. Accordingly, every subject in the preliminary training must be so conceived and shaped as yielding, during that period, general aptitudes, general ideas, and knowledge of special facts, which, taken in conjunction, form a body of acquirement essential to educated people. Furthermore it must be shown that the valuable part of that body of acquirement could not be more easily and quickly gained in some other way, by some other combination of subjects.

In considering the framing of a scientific curriculum subject to these conditions, we must beware of the fallacy of the soft option. It is this pitfall which has ruined so many promising schemes of reform. It seems such an easy solution, that, in order

to gain time, we should shape a course comprising merely the interesting descriptive facts of the subject and the more important and exciting generalizations. In this way our course is self-contained and can easily be compressed into a reasonable time. It will certainly be a failure, and the reason of the failure illustrates the difficulty of the art of education. In order to explain this, let us recur to the educational cynic whom I introduced at the beginning of this paper; for he really is a formidable critic. He will point out that in a few years your pupil will have forgotten the precise nature of any facts which you teach him, and will almost certainly have muddled your generalizations into incorrect forms. The cynic will ask, what is the use of a vague remembrance of the wrong date for the last glacial epoch, and of a totally erroneous idea of the meaning of "the survival of the fittest"? Furthermore, we may well doubt whether your science, as thus taught, will be really interesting. Interest depends upon background, that is to say, upon the relations of the new element of thought or perception to the pre-existing mental furniture. If your children have not got the right background, even "the survival of the fittest" will fail to enthuse them. The interest of a sweeping generalization is the interest of a broad high road to men who know what travel is; and the pleasure of the road has its roots in the labour of the journey. Again facts are exciting to the imagination in so far as they illuminate some scheme of thought, perhaps only dimly discerned or realized, some day-dreams begotten by old racial experience, or some clear-cut theory exactly comprehended. The complex of both factors of interest satisfies the cravings inherent in that mysterious reaching out of experience from sensation to knowledge, and from blind instinct to thoughtful purpose.

The conclusion is that you can only elicit sustained interest from a process of instruction which sets before the pupils definite tasks which keep their minds at stretch in determining facts, in illustrating these facts by ideas, and in illustrating

ideas by their application to complex facts. I am simply enforcing the truism that no reform in education can abolish the necessity for hard work and exact knowledge.

Every subject in the general education must pull its weight in contributing to the building up of the disciplined power of definitely controlled thought. Experience amply proves that no one special training is adequate for this purpose; the classical scholar cannot necessarily focus mathematical ideas, and the mathematician may be a slovenly thinker outside his science, and neither classic nor mathematician may have acquired the habits of procedure requisite for observation and analysis of natural phenomena. In this connection the function of the study of a subject is not so much to produce knowledge as to form habits. It is its business to transmute thought into an instinct which does not smother thought but direct it, to generate the feeling for the important sort of scientific ideas and for the important ways of scientific analysis, to implant the habit of seeking for causes and of classifying by similarities. Equally important is the habit of definitely controlled observation. It is the besetting fallacy of over-intellectual people to assume that education consists in training people in the abstract power of thought. What is important is the welding of thought to observation. The first effect of the union of thought and observation is to make observation exact. You cannot make an exact determination of the passing phenomena of experience unless you have predetermined what it is you are going to observe, so as to fix attention on just those elements of the perceptual field. It is this habit of predetermined perception and the instinctive recognition of its importance which is one of the greatest gifts of science to general education. It is here that practical work in the laboratory, or field work in noting geological or botanical characteristics, is so important. Such work must be made interesting to obtain the proper engrossment of attention, and it must be linked with general ideas and with adequate theory to train in the habit of predetermining observa-



tion by thought. Every training impresses on its recipient a certain character; and the various elements in the general education must be so handled as to enrich the final character of the pupil by their contribution. We have been discussing the peculiar value of science in this respect. It should elicit the habit of first-hand observation, and should train the pupil to relate general ideas to immediate perceptions, and thereby obtain exactness of observation and fruitfulness of thought. I repeat that primarily this acquirement is not an access of knowledge but a modification of character by the impress of habit. Literary people have a way of relegating science to the category of useful knowledge, and of conceiving the impress on character as gained from literature alone. Accordingly I have emphasized this point.

We have, however, not yet exhausted the analysis of the impress on character due to science. The imagination is disciplined and strengthened. The process of thinking ahead of the phenomena is essentially a work of the imagination. Of course it involves only one specific type of imaginative functioning which is thus strengthened, just as poetic literature strengthens another specific type. Undoubtedly there will be some interplay between the types, but we must not conceive the imagination as a definite faculty which is strengthened as a whole by any particular imaginative act of a specific type. Accordingly science should give something to the imagination which cannot be otherwise obtained. If we are finally to sum up in one phrase the peculiar impress on character to be obtained from a scientific training, I would say that it is a certain type of instinctive direction in thought and observation of nature, and a facility of imagination in respect to the objects thus contemplated, issuing in a stimulus towards creativeness. We now turn to the other aspect of science. It is the systematization of supremely useful knowledge. In the modern world men and women must possess a necessary minimum of this knowledge, in an explicit form, and beyond this, their minds must be so trained that

they can increase this knowledge as occasion demands. Accordingly the general education during the "pre-sixteen" period must include some descriptive summaries of physiological, botanical, physical, chemical, astronomical, and geological facts, even although it is not possible to choose all those sciences as subjects for serious study in the school curriculum. Especially this is important in the case of physiology owing to the accidental circumstance that we all have bodies.

We see therefore that the scientific curriculum must have a soft element and a hard element. The hard element will consist in the attainment of exact knowledge based on first-hand observation. The laboratory work will be so framed as to illustrate such concepts and theoretical generalizations as the pupil is to know. I would insist that science in this stage of education loses nearly all its value, if its concepts and generalizations are not illustrated and tested by practical work. This union of acquirement of concepts, of comprehension of general laws, of reasoning from them, and of testing by experiment will go slowly at first, because the child's powers of mind have to be built up. The pupil has not got the requisite generalizing faculty ready made, and it is the very purpose of the education to give it to him. Furthermore little bits of diverse sciences are useless for the purpose; with such excessive dispersion the systematic character of science is lost, nor does the knowledge go deep enough to be interesting. We must beware of presenting science as a set of pretentious names for obvious facts or as a set of verbal phrases. Accordingly the hard element in the scientific training should be confined to one or at most two sciences, for example, physics and chemistry. These sciences have also the advantage of being key sciences without which it is hardly possible to understand the others. By the age of sixteen every pupil should have done some hard work at these two sciences, and—generally speaking—it is scarcely possible that there will have been any time for analogous work in any other natural science, after the necessary mathematical time has been

allotted. Probably in a four years' course the best quantitative division would be two years of physics and two years of chemistry, and mathematics all the time. But assuredly it is not desirable to do all the physics in the first period of two years, and all the chemistry in the second period. The first simple ideas clustering round the most elementary experiments will undoubtedly be physical and mechanical. But as some serious progress is made the two sciences illustrate each other, and also relieve each other by the width of interest thus developed. For example, the influence of physical conditions, such as temperature, on the rate, and even the possibility, of chemical transformations is an elementary lesson on the unity of nature more valuable than abstract formulation of statement on the subject.

Two factors should go to form the soft element in scientific education. The first and most important is browsing, with the very slightest external direction, and mainly dependent on the wayward impulses of a student's inward springs of interest. No scheme for education, and least of all for scientific education, can be complete without some facility and encouragement for browsing. The dangers of our modern efficient schemes remind one of Matthew Arnold's line<sup>1</sup> "For rigorous teachers seized my youth." Poor youth! Unless we are careful, we shall organize genius out of existence: and some measure of genius is the rightful inheritance of every man. Such browsing will normally take the form either of chemical experiments, or of field work in geology, or in zoology, or in botany, or of astronomical observation with a small telescope. Anyhow, if he can be got to do so, encourage the child to do something for himself according to his own fancy. Such work will reflect back interest on to the hard part of his training. Here the collector's instinct is the ally of science, as well as of art. Also it is surprising how many people—Shelley, for example—whose main interests are

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<sup>1</sup> Stanzas from the *Grande Chartreuse*.

literary derive the keenest pleasure from divagations into some scientific pursuit. In his youth, the born poet often wavers between science and literature; and his choice is determined by the chance attraction of one or other of the alternative modes of expressing his imaginative joy in nature. It is essential to keep in mind, that science and poetry have the same root in human nature. Forgetfulness of this fact will ruin, and is ruining, our educational system. Efficient gentlemen are sitting on boards determining how best to adapt the curriculum to a uniform examination. Let them beware lest, proving themselves descendants of Wordsworth's bad man, they

Take the radiance from the clouds  
In which the sun his setting shrouds.

The other factor should consist of descriptive lectures, designed for the purpose of giving necessary scientific information on subjects such as physiology, and also for the purpose of exciting general interest in the various sciences. No great amount of time need be taken up in this way. I am thinking of about three to six lectures a term. It should be possible to convey some arresting information about most sciences in this way, and in addition to concentrate on the necessary information on particular points which it is desired to emphasize. The difficulty about such lectures is that comparatively few people are able to give them successfully. It requires a peculiar knack. For this reason I suggest that there should be an exchange of lecturers between schools, and also that successful extension lecturers should be asked to take up this kind of work. It is evident that with a little organization and co-operation the thing could be done, though some care would be required in the arrangement of details. Finally we come to the position of science in general education after the age of sixteen. The pupil is now rapidly maturing and the problem assumes entirely a new aspect. We must remember that he is now engaged mainly in studying a special subject such as classics, or history,

which he will continue during his subsequent University course. Among other things, his power of abstract thought is growing, and he is taking a keen delight in generalizations. I am thinking of boys in the sixth form and of undergraduates. I suggest that in general practical work should be dropped, so far as any official enforcement is concerned. What the pupil now wants is a series of lectures on some general aspects of sciences, for example, on the conservation of energy, on the theory of evolution and controversies connected with it, such as the inheritance of acquired characters, on the electromagnetic theory of matter and the constitutions of the molecule, and other analogous topics. Furthermore, the applications of science should not be neglected—machinery and its connection with the economic revolution at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the importance of nitrates and their artificial production, coal-tar, aeronautics, and other topics. As in the case of lectures at the earlier stage, not much time should be occupied by them, and also there is the same difficulty in finding the lecturers. I believe that these lectures are easier to give than the more elementary ones. But I think that it will still be found necessary to create some organization so that local talent can be supplemented by external aid.

Also at this stage books can be brought in to help; for example, Marett's *Anthropology* and Myres' *Dawn of History*, both in "The Home University Library," will form a bridge conducting the Historians from the general theory of zoological evolution to the classical history which forms the commencement of their own special studies. I merely give this instance to show the sort of thing, and the scale of treatment, that I am thinking about. But this general treatment of science in the later stage of education will lose most of its value, if there is no sound basis laid in the education before the age of sixteen.

I will conclude with a general caution which summarizes the guiding principle of the preceding remarks: There is very

little time, and so in the formal teaching above all things we must avoid both an aimless aggregation of details either in class or in laboratory and the enunciation of verbal statements which bring no concrete ideas to the minds of the pupils.

#### COMMENT

The general purpose of "Science in General Education" and of the essays by Abraham Lincoln and Sidney Hook which follow is to persuade the reader to accept a particular interpretation and evaluation of aspects of human experience. Such is the general purpose of many other essays in this volume. What sets these essays apart is the obviousness of their use of logic as one of the means of achieving their purpose. They differ particularly from the essays in the next subsection, which try to persuade the reader by an equally obvious appeal to his emotions. This essay focuses our attention upon its ideas and makes difficult, or at least unimportant, all but the most neutral attitudes. The essays by Lincoln and Hook appeal more to the emotions, but logic still carries a large part of their argument.

The tone of this essay, in keeping with its general purpose, is subdued and unobtrusive. Insofar as it is felt at all, it is serious and detached and yet friendly. The seriousness and detachment are partly the result of the ideas themselves and partly the result of the very high and formal usage level throughout most of the essay, the absence of richly connotative words and provocative images, and the notably long paragraphs. The friendliness results from the point of view and the occasional bits of informal usage. Whitehead speaks directly to the reader in the first person, and by frequent use of "we" creates the impression that he and the reader are working together toward the solution of a common problem. In the short intervals between elements in the argument the essay descends to an informal level of usage suited to this impression (as in "Anyhow, as they soon forget it all, it did not seem much to matter"). But none of this distracts the reader for a moment from the ideas and the argument.

The particular purpose of this essay is to convince the reader that the study of science has an important place in general education and that this place must be determined by considering with it the nature of a uniform program of studies for the students of a whole school. The order of the ideas in the essay is simple and well-suited to the inductive reasoning which prevails in most of the piece. The argument begins with a statement that the problem of the place of science in general education cannot be solved by itself. This is supported by explanations which anticipate and fill in the background of the related problems of determining the function of a general education. Then the terms on which both problems are discussed are set forth. The preparation for the discussion is complete.

A partial statement of the larger problem, which has been clearly implied in the introduction, is followed by an analysis of its nature and causes. Then the argument moves on to the special problem of science. From this point forward, it considers both problems at once by examining their relationship. The core of the argument is reached with suggestions for solving them together. Then the close of the essay returns by way of summary to the larger problem of the function of general education and reaffirms the principles which have guided the argument and its interpretations.

Following the methods of inductive reasoning, the larger generalizations about the problems are not taken as given but as statements to be established by reference to the facts. The direction of this reasoning, therefore, is from particular instances toward the general statement. Such, for example, is the direction among the sentences of the sixth paragraph. Beginning with the generalization that "In considering the framing of a scientific curriculum subject to these conditions, we must beware of the fallacy of the soft option," the paragraph consists of a number of particular instances examined to show that they support this statement as a sound observation on the problem of the place of science in general education. However, within some of the divisions of the essay, the reasoning is deductive. That is, certain generalizations are assumed to be true and are applied to particular instances so that conclusions can be drawn about the nature of these instances. Such is the reasoning

in the concluding sentences of the second paragraph and in the following:

In considering the general principles which are to govern our selection of details, we must remember that we are concerned with general education. Accordingly we must be careful to avoid conceiving science either in quantity or quality as it would be presented to specialists in that subject. We must not assume ample time or unusual scientific ability.

To indicate the logical relationships, Whitehead is generous with directive words and phrases ("In the first place," "Our second step," "The problem is this," "We see therefore") and with frequent summaries. He has avoided such digressions as the argument *ad hominem* and the so-called "transfer." In the argument *ad hominem* the writer attempts to appeal to the predispositions of the person to whom the argument is addressed. It is a form of argument much used during political campaigns to win offices for men who cannot be strongly supported by logical reasoning. The device is used with subtle modifications by F. L. Lucas to account for the defects of Browning's verse, with fervor by Henry David Thoreau to defend John Brown's actions, and with outrageous impudence and good humor by H. L. Mencken to exalt Beethoven. In the "transfer" the writer arouses the reader's enthusiasm or indignation by reference to one object or idea and then transfers the emotion to a nearby but not necessarily related object or idea. Candidates for political office associate themselves with log cabins, flags, mother love, and so forth in the hope that our enthusiasm for these will be transferred to themselves. Likewise, oil companies try to persuade us to buy their products by offering pictures of handsome men and glamorous girls looking at oil cans with stricken eyes and attitudes of surrender. Presumably we will take a quart of oil in lieu of a kiss. This device has been used more or less legitimately by Winston Churchill, D. H. Lawrence, Mark Twain, and other essayists in works not meant to be particularly logical. But, like the argument *ad hominem*, it would be out of place in this essay, whose purpose will admit only rigorous logic.

So well has that purpose been realized that there is not one idea



in this compact, clear essay which does not stand in deductive or inductive relationship with those about it. Such rigorous attention to logic may make this essay less vivid and exciting than some written in a freer manner, but it does make the essay persuasive. We may not be deeply stirred by this essay, but we are probably convinced.

## Address at Cooper Institute, New York

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

MR. PRESIDENT *and Fellow-Citizens of New York*: The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the "New-York Times," Senator Douglas said:

Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now.

I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

What is the frame of government under which we live? The answer must be, "The Constitution of the United States." That Constitution consists of the original, framed in 1787, and under which the present government first went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? I sup-

pose the "thirty-nine" who signed the original instrument may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is almost exactly true to say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

I take these "thirty-nine," for the present, as being "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now?"

It is this: Does the proper division of local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our federal government to control as to slavery in our federal territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood "better than we." Let us now inquire whether the "thirty-nine," or any of them, ever acted upon this question; and if they did, how they acted upon it—how they expressed that better understanding. In 1784, three years before the Constitution, the United States then owning the Northwestern Territory, and no other, the Congress of the Confederation had before them the question of prohibiting slavery in that territory; and four of the "thirty-nine" who afterward framed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on that question. Of these, Roger Sherman, Thomas Mifflin, and Hugh Williamson voted for the prohibition, thus showing that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory. The other of the four, James McHenry, voted against the prohibition, showing that for some cause he thought it improper to vote for it.

In 1787, still before the Constitution, but while the conven-

tion was in session framing it, and while the Northwestern Territory still was the only territory owned by the United States, the same question of prohibiting slavery in the territory again came before the Congress of the Confederation; and two more of the "thirty-nine" who afterward signed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on the question. They were William Blount and William Few; and they both voted for the prohibition—thus showing that in their understanding no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory. This time the prohibition became a law, being part of what is now well known as the Ordinance of '87.

The question of federal control of slavery in the territories seems not to have been directly before the convention which framed the original Constitution; and hence it is not recorded that the "thirty-nine," or any of them, while engaged on that instrument, expressed any opinion on that precise question.

In 1789, by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution, an act was passed to enforce the Ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. The bill for this act was reported by one of the "thirty-nine"—Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without a word of opposition, and finally passed both branches without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this Congress there were sixteen of the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman, William S. Johnson, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, Thomas Fitzsimmons, William Few, Abraham Baldwin, Rufus King, William Paterson, George Clymer, Richard Bassett, George Read, Pierce Butler, Daniel Carroll, and James Madison.

This shows that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution,

properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the federal territory; else both their fidelity to correct principle, and their oath to support the Constitution, would have constrained them to oppose the prohibition.

Again, George Washington, another of the "thirty-nine," was then President of the United States, and as such approved and signed the bill, thus completing its validity as a law, and thus showing that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

No great while after the adoption of the original Constitution, North Carolina ceded to the federal government the country now constituting the state of Tennessee; and a few years later Georgia ceded that which now constitutes the states of Mississippi and Alabama. In both deeds of cession it was made a condition by the ceding states that the federal government should not prohibit slavery in the ceded country. Besides this, slavery was then actually in the ceded country. Under these circumstances, Congress, on taking charge of these countries, did not absolutely prohibit slavery within them. But they did interfere with it—take control of it—even there, to a certain extent. In 1798 Congress organized the territory of Mississippi. In the act of organization they prohibited the bringing of slaves into the territory from any place without the United States, by fine, and giving freedom to slaves so brought. This act passed both branches of Congress without yeas and nays. In that Congress were three of the "thirty-nine" who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, George Read, and Abraham Baldwin. They all probably voted for it. Certainly they would have placed their opposition to it upon record if, in their understanding, any line dividing local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

In 1803 the federal government purchased the Louisiana country. Our former territorial acquisitions came from certain of our own states; but this Louisiana country was acquired from a foreign nation. In 1804 Congress gave a territorial organization to that part of it which now constitutes the state of Louisiana. New Orleans, lying within that part, was an old and comparatively large city. There were other considerable towns and settlements, and slavery was extensively and thoroughly intermingled with the people. Congress did not, in the Territorial Act, prohibit slavery; but they did interfere with it—take control of it—in a more marked and extensive way than they did in the case of Mississippi. The substance of the provision therein made in relation to slaves was:

1st. That no slave should be imported into the territory from foreign parts.

2nd. That no slave should be carried into it who had been imported into the United States since the first day of May, 1798.

3rd. That no slave should be carried into it, except by the owner, and for his own use as a settler; the penalty in all the cases being a fine upon the violator of the law, and freedom to the slave.

This act also was passed without ayes or nays. In the Congress which passed it there were two of the "thirty-nine." They were Abraham Baldwin and Jonathan Dayton. As stated in the case of Mississippi, it is probable they both voted for it. They would not have allowed it to pass, without recording their opposition to it if, in their understanding, it violated either the line properly dividing local from federal authority, or any provision of the Constitution.

In 1819-20 came and passed the Missouri question. Many votes were taken, by yeas and nays, in both branches of Congress, upon the various phases of the general question. Two of the "thirty-nine"—Rufus King and Charles Pinckney—were members of that Congress. Mr. King steadily voted for slavery prohibition and against all compromises, while Mr. Pinckney

as steadily voted against slavery prohibition and against all compromises. By this, Mr. King showed that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, was violated by Congress prohibiting slavery in federal territory; while Mr. Pinckney, by his votes, showed that, in his understanding, there was some sufficient reason for opposing such prohibition in that case.

The cases I have mentioned are the only acts of the "thirty-nine," or of any of them, upon the direct issue, which I have been able to discover.

To enumerate the persons who thus acted as being four in 1784, two in 1787, seventeen in 1789, three in 1798, two in 1804, and two in 1819-20 there would be thirty of them. But this would be counting John Langdon, Roger Sherman, William Few, Rufus King, and George Read each twice, and Abraham Baldwin three times. The true number of those of the "thirty-nine" whom I have shown to have acted upon the question which, by the text, they understood better than we, is twenty-three, leaving sixteen not shown to have acted upon it in any way.

Here, then, we have twenty-three out of our thirty-nine fathers "who framed the government under which we live," who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they "understood just as well, and even better, than we do now"; and twenty-one of them—a clear majority of the whole "thirty-nine"—so acting upon it as to make them guilty of gross political impropriety and willful perjury if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves, and sworn to support, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. Thus the twenty-one acted; and, as actions speak louder than words, so actions under such responsibility speak still louder.

Two of the twenty-three voted against congressional pro-

hibition of slavery in the federal territories, in the instances in which they acted upon the question. But for what reasons they so voted is not known. They may have done so because they thought a proper division of local from federal authority, or some provision or principle of the Constitution, stood in the way; or they may, without any such question, have voted against the prohibition on what appeared to them to be sufficient grounds of expediency. No one who has sworn to support the Constitution can conscientiously vote for what he understands to be an unconstitutional measure, however expedient he may think it; but one may and ought to vote against a measure which he deems constitutional if, at the same time, he deems it inexpedient. It, therefore, would be unsafe to set down even the two who voted against the prohibition as having done so because, in their understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

The remaining sixteen of the "thirty-nine," so far as I have discovered, have left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of federal control of slavery in the federal territories. But there is much reason to believe that their understanding upon that question would not have appeared different from that of their twenty-three compeers, had it been manifested at all.

For the purpose of adhering rigidly to the test, I have purposely omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any person, however distinguished, other than the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution; and, for the same reason, I have also omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any of the "thirty-nine" even on any other phase of the general question of slavery. If we should look into their acts and declarations on those other phases, as the foreign slave-trade, and the morality and policy of slavery generally, it would appear to us that on the direct



question of federal control of slavery in federal territories, the sixteen, if they had acted at all, would probably have acted just as the twenty-three did. Among that sixteen were several of the most noted anti-slavery men of those times—as Dr. Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris—while there was not one now known to have been otherwise, unless it may be John Rutledge, of South Carolina.

The sum of the whole is that of our thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution, twenty-one—a clear majority of the whole—certainly understood that no proper division of local from federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control slavery in the federal territories; while all the rest had probably the same understanding. Such, unquestionably, was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question “better than we.”

But, so far, I have been considering the understanding of the question manifested by the framers of the original Constitution. In and by the original instrument, a mode was provided for amending it; and, as I have already stated, the present frame of “the government under which we live” consists of that original, and twelve amendatory articles framed and adopted since. Those who now insist that federal control of slavery in federal territories violates the Constitution, point us to the provisions which they suppose it thus violates; and, as I understand, they all fix upon provisions in these amendatory articles, and not in the original instrument. The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott case, plant themselves upon the Fifth Amendment, which provides that no person shall be deprived of “life, liberty, or property without due process of law”; while Senator Douglas and his peculiar adherents plant themselves upon the Tenth Amendment, providing that “the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution” “are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.”

Now, it so happens that these amendments were framed by

the first Congress which sat under the Constitution—the identical Congress which passed the act, already mentioned, enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. Not only was it the same Congress, but they were the identical, same individual men who, at the same session, and at the same time within the session, had under consideration, and in progress toward maturity, these constitutional amendments, and this act prohibiting slavery in all the territory the nation then owned. The constitutional amendments were introduced before, and passed after, the act enforcing the Ordinance of '87; so that, during the whole pendency of the act to enforce the ordinance, the constitutional amendments were also pending.

The seventy-six members of that Congress, including sixteen of the framers of the original Constitution, as before stated, were pre-eminently our fathers who framed that part of "the government under which we live" which is now claimed as forbidding the federal government to control slavery in the federal territories.

Is it not a little presumptuous in anyone at this day to affirm that the two things which that Congress deliberately framed, and carried to maturity at the same time, are absolutely inconsistent with each other? And does not such affirmation become impudently absurd when coupled with the other affirmation, from the same mouth, that those who did the two things alleged to be inconsistent, understood whether they really were inconsistent better than we—better than he who affirms that they are inconsistent?

It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of the Congress which framed the amendments thereto, taken together, do certainly include those who may be fairly called "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." And so assuming, I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Con-

stitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. I go a step further. I defy anyone to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century), declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. To those who now so declare I give not only "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood. I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is, that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive, and argument so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" were of the same opinion—thus substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day sincerely believes "our fathers

who framed the government under which we live" used and applied principles, in other cases, which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local from federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories, he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves; and especially should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they "understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

But enough! Let all who believe that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now," speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. This is all Republicans ask—all Republicans desire—in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers gave it be not grudgingly, but fully and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content.

And now, if they would listen—as I suppose they will not—I would address a few words to the Southern people.

I would say to them: You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people; and I consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still, when you speak of us Republicans, you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensa-

ble prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now, can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes in your section. The fact is substantially true; but does it prove the issue? If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet, are you willing to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No! Then you really believe that the principle which “our fathers who framed the government under which we live” thought so clearly right as to adopt it, and indorse it again and again, upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly

wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment's consideration.

Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning; and about one year after he penned it, he wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free states.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his policy, or upon you, who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

But you say you are conservative—eminently conservative—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live"; while you with one accord reject, and scout and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among yourselves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new propositions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave-

code for the territories; some for Congress forbidding the territories to prohibit slavery within their limits; some for maintaining slavery in the territories through the judiciary; some for the "gur-reat purrinciple" that "if one man would enslave another, no third man should object," fantastically called "popular sovereignty"; but never a man among you is in favor of federal prohibition of slavery in federal territories, according to the practice of "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within which our government originated. Consider, then, whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policy of the old times.

You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harpers Ferry! John Brown!! John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harpers Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed to make the proof. You need not be told that

persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harpers Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." You never dealt fairly by us in relation to this affair. When it occurred, some important state elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came, and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favor. Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference with your slaves, or with you about your slaves. Surely, this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection, twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harpers Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very elastic fancy to



the conclusion that Southampton was "got up by Black Republicanism." In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of action cannot be attained. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.

Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule; and the slave revolution in Haiti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears, or much hopes, for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago, "It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly; and their places be, *pari passu*, filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up."

Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power

of emancipation is in the federal government. He spoke of Virginia; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slaveholding states only. The federal government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harpers Ferry, were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case, and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's book, and the like, break up the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgment and a feeling against slavery in this nation, which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgment and feeling—that sentiment—by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would

the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing no such thing.

When you make these declarations you have a specific and well-understood allusion to an assumed constitutional right of yours to take slaves into the federal territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the Constitution, even by implication.

Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.

This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between *dictum* and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the federal territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement

in the opinion that "the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution."

An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not "distinctly and expressly affirmed" in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution; but they pledge their veracity that it is "distinctly and expressly" affirmed there—"distinctly," that is, not mingled with anything else—"expressly," that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word "slave" nor "slavery" is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word "property" even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave, or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a "person"; and wherever his master's legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as "service or labor which may be due"—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement, and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

And then it is to be remembered that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live"—the men who made the Constitution—decided this same constitutional question in our favor long ago: decided it without division among

themselves when making the decision; without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject and nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

Will they be satisfied if the territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the rage now. Will it satisfy them, if, in the future, we have nothing to do with in-

vasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know, because we know we never had anything to do with invasions and insurrections; and yet this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This, we know by experience, is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly protested our purpose to let them alone; but this has had no tendency to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly—done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated—we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Senator Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-state constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely in this way. Most of them would probably say to us, "Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery." But we do let them alone—have never disturbed them—so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of doing, until we cease saying.

I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our free-state constitutions. Yet those constitu-

tions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and when all these other sayings shall have been silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national territories, and to overrun us here in these free states? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle

ground between the right and the wrong; vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of "don't care" on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.



# The Hero and Democracy

SIDNEY HOOK

IF THE HERO is defined as an event-making individual who redetermines the course of history, it follows at once that a democratic community must be eternally on guard against him.

This simple, and to some unwelcome, conclusion is involved in the very conception of a democratic society. For in such a society leadership cannot arrogate to itself heroic power. At legally determined intervals government must draw its sanction from the *freely given consent* of the governed. And so long as that consent is *freely* given, that is, after the opposition has been heard, the policy or action agreed upon becomes the one for which the community is responsible even though the leadership may have initiated it.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of leadership in a democracy is highly complex. Its importance warrants further clarification. Our reflections in this essay will be normative. They will involve judgments of value concerning democracy and democracy's good.

An old Chinese proverb tells us "the great man is a public

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<sup>1</sup>For further amplification of the meaning of "freely given consent," see Chapter thirteen of my *Reason, Social Myths and Democracy*, New York, 1941; also "The Philosophical Presuppositions of Democracy," *Ethics*, April 1942.

misfortune." The sentiment aptly expresses the experience and wisdom of a peace-loving race. Were the victims of great men's glory to speak, not only in China but almost anywhere, they would echo this homely judgment with sighs and tears and curses. For on the whole, heroes in history have carved out their paths of greatness by wars, conquests, revolutions, and holy crusades.

And yet this Chinese proverb epitomizes only past history, and not all of that. A great man may sometimes be a public fortune. His absence is far from being a sign that we shall be spared great misfortunes. Indeed, in face of calamity the people pray for a deliverer. Among the calamities they pray to be delivered from may be the rule of an earlier deliverer. If we were to conclude from the evil things great men have done that their greatness is the source of their evil, we should have to condemn all talent and capacity because they are often abused.

Great men, then, may be good men. And still a democracy must be suspicious of them! For essential to democracy is the participation of the governed in determining their own welfare. This participation is coupled with the *hope* that the governed will select and elect their governors wisely, that is, in such a way as to gratify as many of their needs and wants as the situation permits. But more important than this hope, which is sometimes sadly at variance with the facts, is the belief that it is more worthy of men to decide their own fate than to let others decide it for them.

The hero in a democratic community—the potentially event-making man—may sincerely believe that he accepts its underlying philosophy. But sooner or later he finds himself straining against two features of the democratic process. The first is the principle of majority rule, especially when he is convinced that the majority is wrong on a matter of great import. The second is the slowness of its operation even when he believes the majority is right.

No one believes in majority rule as a reasonable principle of decision in a family of small children, a prison, or an institution for the feeble-minded. To the extent that we accept majority rule as an essential feature of democracy, we are committed to the well-grounded belief that, on the whole, men are not infants, cretins, or criminals. But although men are capable of rationality, reason in human affairs is so much a matter of weighing interest, and interests so often are at variance with each other, that the majority's reason may be the minority's disaster. This proves that the principle of majority rule is not sufficient for democracy, not that it is unnecessary. Nor does it prove that certain rights are inalienable and absolute, for not one such right can be mentioned which under certain circumstances may not need to be abridged in the interest of other rights.

What is necessary in addition to the principle of majority rule is the recognition by every group interest in society of the legitimacy of any group interest, provided the group in question accepts the methods of *free* inquiry and democratic decision as principles of negotiating conflicts of interest. Even so the majority may be mistaken and unjust, even as the man who follows the lead of evidence may sometimes be mistaken while the man who acts blindly may be right. But the majority that provides a minority with the possibility of becoming a majority through the education of citizens by public opposition has gone as far as it can politically to meet legitimate grievance. Under the conditions indicated, the democrat who enjoys freedom of agitation must abide by the decision of the majority even when he believes it to be wrong.

This does not *in principle* justify toleration of a minority whose actual program calls for the overthrow of democratic political institutions by force of arms. Any particular minority may be tolerated on grounds of prudence or expediency, for example, where it is opposed to another minority, more dangerous at the moment, or where its suppression is likely to

establish a precedent that may be extended to other minorities who are genuinely devoted to democratic processes.

The "potential hero" in a democracy sees what others do not. His will to action is stronger. His knowledge of what must be done to realize what he sees is surer. For these reasons, he finds himself, more likely than not, in a minority. His sense of his vocation impels him to fight for his insight. His loyalty to the democratic ideal compels him to make this insight the common faith of the majority. If the latter remain stubbornly intractable, his chances of heroic action, as a democrat, are lost. The hero fades into history as a "village Hamden."

Superior talent and strong vision, however, press for expression. So far as the hero does not renounce politics as a sphere of activity, his task becomes to get himself accepted by a majority. For, as a democrat, he does not dare to admit to himself or to others that he wants to make himself independent of the majority. In pursuit of a majority, he may seek to win it, broadly speaking, by the patient methods of education, relying upon the inherent reasonableness of his vision to make its way.

Insofar as he does this, and only so far, democracy is safe from the hero. This means that he courts failure. But the hero may master the arts of the demagogue and use the very instruments of democracy to debase its quality. Yet as long as democratic controls are not abolished, the hero as demagogue must still build up, cajole, and cater to the majority. He acquires a contempt for the group he leads by virtue of the methods by which he corrupts them. In the process, if his own will and insight grow uncertain and cloudy, he becomes just another politician. He is a hero who has missed his chance. But where his will and insight remain firm, the hero as demagogue must "fool" his following into accepting them. He must develop a public platform, on the basis of which he solicits confidence, and a secret program in whose behalf he

uses the confidence so won. He becomes a threat to democracy. The greater his faith in himself, the more disinterested his intentions, the more fateful the issue to which his heroic vision drives him, the more insidious is the menace to the whole rationale of democracy. Particularly so if the hero or potential event-making character believes himself to be the indispensable instrument of his vision.

Until now we have assumed that the standpoint of the hero is one that cannot recommend itself to the majority in the light of free discussion and intelligent inquiry and that if it is adopted it is only in virtue of chicanery and demagogic fraud. Let us now assume that the majority is properly persuaded that the hero is right. The latter may still regard the processes of democracy as a fetter upon his calling. For these processes grind too slowly, and many things will not wait. If he is confident that he knows the community's good, and convinced that it hangs in the balance, the hero is tempted to confront it with a *fait accompli*. Well-intentioned opposition that delays and obstructs appears to him as objective betrayal, and can easily be pilloried as such. And he knows that, if he succeeds, a great deal will be forgiven him.

But need a democracy move slowly? No, for its pace can be accelerated by delegation of power to the leader or hero. Yet in the best of situations, this only mitigates the dangers of delay; it does not eliminate them. For a democracy cannot in advance delegate all its powers and remain a democracy. And the crucial situation is always one that involves the undelegated powers. Since power cannot in a democracy be delegated in perpetuity, the crucial situation may arise just when the delegation of power is up for *renewal*. Again, the delegation of power is always requested in a moment of crisis or emergency. But who is to determine when the moment is here?

The hero always presses for greater powers. It is natural to his vocation that he should do so. He is as eager to accept new powers as he is reluctant to surrender them after they are

granted. And it is true that, in a troubled world, no democratic community can survive for long unless it entrusts its leaders with great powers. At the same time, what it gives with reluctance, it must take back with eagerness. The timing is all—and it is not likely that the hero and the community will agree on what time it is.

There cannot be any guarantee that a leader will not usurp delegated power to carry out a heroic event-making task. But a democracy would be foolish to refuse delegation of power for this reason if the situation is so crucial that decisive action must be taken at once. On the other hand, there may be no evidence that delegated powers will be abused. Nonetheless, a democracy would be foolish not to withdraw them promptly when the emergency is over, for they are a standing temptation to abuse and usurpation.

A democracy is imperiled not alone by its heroes, necessary as they may sometimes be for survival. It is imperiled by any group of its citizens who are more attached to the advantages or privileges they enjoy under democracy, or hope it will bring, than they are to the democratic process of bringing them about. For these groups, which set greater store on peace or prosperity or social status than they do on the methods of democracy to preserve (or modify) them, are the ones which feel justified in calling in the hero to cherish their "goods" even at the cost of democracy. An instructive example is furnished by conservative classes in western Europe who, convinced that democratic legislation had unjustly abridged the privileges of property, opened the gates to Mussolini and Hitler. True, their profession of democratic allegiance was merely lip service to begin with. But not so for the large numbers of the middle classes and even workers who constituted the mass base of Fascism. Security, fixed prices, employment meant more to them than democracy. They were to learn that when democracy goes, the goods for which it is sacrificed, without becoming more certain, are degraded in quality.

If we were to list as heroes the event-making men of the past, we should find few of them in the histories of democratic societies. It is in conformity with the genius of democratic society that this should be so.

There is great wisdom in the notorious political ingratitude of democratic communities. They usually refuse to glorify their leaders until they are dead. And the best reason for honoring these leaders is that they did not yield to the temptations of power, or that they were prepared to step down from positions of power even when they were convinced that they were right and the majority wrong.

Great men do not ask permission to be born. Nor do they ask permission of democracies to lead them. They find their own way to the tasks they feel called to fulfill, unless crushed by a hostile environment or isolated by the tide of events. Democracies do not have to seek these heroes when it seeks leaders. For if they exist, they will make themselves heard. A democracy must always be girded to protect itself against them even as it uses them, relying not on *their* intentions, which are always honorable but not infrequently messianic, but on the mechanisms of its own democratic institutions, on the plurality of centers of power and interest, and on the spirit of its education and morale.

In a democratic community education must pitch the ideal of the hero in a different key from that of the event-making man. The heroes in a democracy should be the great figures in the Pantheon of thought, the men of ideas, of social vision, of scientific achievement and artistic power. For it is these men who mould the intellectual ideals and social attitudes of the citizens, who without knowledge, quickened perception, and educated taste cannot realize the promise of democracy. If we are earnest in our belief in democracy, we must recognize that it is those who are affected by a basic policy who must pass upon it, either directly or indirectly. And if they are to pass

upon it intelligently, know when to delegate power or withdraw it, and enhance the quality of political life by their participation, they must develop a sensitiveness to what is significant and what is trivial, an indifference to rhetorical bombast but a keen interest in what it conceals, an ability to isolate relevant issues and to weigh the available evidence.

The statesman in a democracy exercises his leadership by *proposing* a policy. But whether it is adopted and why depends upon the representatives of the democratic community who are chosen by individuals themselves potentially representatives. A successful democracy, therefore, may honor its statesmen but it must honor its teachers more—whether they be prophets, scientists, poets, jurists, or philosophers. The true hero of democracy, then, should be not the soldier or the political leader, great as their services may be, but the teacher—the Jeffersons, Holmeses, Deweys, Whitmans, and all others who have given the people vision, method, and knowledge.

It is the task of a democratic society to break down the invidious distinctions reflected in current linguistic usage between the hero and the masses or the average man. This can be accomplished in part by reinterpreting the meaning of the word "hero," and by recognizing that "heroes" can be made by fitting social opportunities more skillfully to specific talents. What we call "the average man" is not a biological but a social phenomenon. Human capacities are much more diversified than our social arrangements take note of.

Where we restrict social opportunities, so that only a few types of excellence are recognized, in respect to them the great mass of individuals, despite their differences, will appear as the dull, gray average. If, however, we extend social opportunities so that each person's specific talents have a stimulus to development and expression, we increase the range of possibility of distinctly significant work. From this point of view, a hero is any individual who does his work well and makes a unique



contribution to the public good. It is sheer prejudice to believe that the grandeur and nobility associated with the heroic life can be found only in careers that reck little of human blood and suffering. Daily toil on any level has its own occasions of struggle, victory, and quiet death. A democracy should contrive its affairs, not to give one or a few the chance to reach heroic stature, but rather to take as a regulative ideal the slogan, "every man a hero."

We call this a "regulative ideal" because it would be Utopian to imagine that it could ever be literally embodied. As a regulative ideal it gives direction to policies that enable society to make the best of whatever powers are available to men.

What are the powers available to men? They are theoretically limited but practically indefinite. In the absence of an environment that encourages their expression, no one can speak with dogmatism about their nature and specific form. Nor can we be certain of the precise limit of human power without allowing for the willed effort that enables the runner to clear a hurdle that until then had been an insuperable obstacle.

A democracy should encourage the belief that all are called and all may be chosen. All may be chosen because a wisely contrived society will take as a point of departure the rich possibilities that nature herself gives through the spontaneous variations in the powers and capacities of men. These variations are the source and promise of new shoots of personality and value. The belief that all may be chosen, acted upon in a co-operating environment, may inspire the added increment of effort that often transforms promise into achievement.

Our conception of a democracy without event-making figures runs counter to a plausible but fundamentally mistaken critique of democracy developed by a notable school of Italian

theorists—Mosca, Pareto, and Michels.<sup>2</sup> These men in different ways seek to establish the impossibility of democracy. Their chief argument is that all political rule involves organization and that all organization, no matter how democratic its mythology, sooner or later comes under the effective control of a minority élite. The history of societies, despite the succession of different political *forms*, is in substance nothing but the succession of different political élites. Democracy is a political form that conceals both the conflicts of interest between the governing élite and the governed and the fact that these conflicts are always undemocratically resolved in favor of the former. To the extent that these élites make history, their outstanding leaders are heroes or event-making figures even in a democracy.

The whole force of this argument rests upon a failure to understand the nature of ideals, including political ideals. In addition, the critique overlooks the fact that the problems of political power are always *specific* and that they allow choices between courses of conduct that strengthen or weaken, extend or diminish particular political ideals. Finally, it underestimates the tremendous differences between societies, all of which fall short in varying degrees of the defined ideal of democracy, and the crucial importance of institutions in the never-ending process of realizing ideals.

In virtue of the nature of things and men, no ideal can be perfectly embodied. There is no such thing as absolute health, absolute wisdom, absolute democracy, an absolutely honest man—or an absolutely fat one. Yet when we employ these ideals intelligently we can order a series of flesh and blood men in such a way as to distinguish between them in respect to their being healthier, wiser, or fatter. And so with states.

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<sup>2</sup> I have previously expounded and criticized the doctrines of this school from a somewhat different point of view in my *Reason, Social Myths and Democracy*, pp. 119 ff., New York, 1940.

There is no absolutely democratic state, but we can tell when states are more democratic or less democratic. Ideals, in short, are functional. They are principles of organization and reorganization but cannot be identified with any particular organization as it exists at any place and time.

If we define a democratic society as one in which the government rests upon the freely given consent of the governed<sup>3</sup> it is obvious that no society is a perfect democracy, even one in which the members are so few that they can all meet in one place without delegating power to representatives. For we never can be sure that consent is freely given, that is, not in bondage to ignorance, rhetoric, or passion. Further, the division of labor requires that decisions be carried out by individuals and not by the assembly. There can be no guarantee that these decisions as well as the discretionary powers they entail will be carried out in the same spirit as that in which they were authorized.

What follows? That democracy is impossible? No more so than that a man cannot be healthy because he cannot enjoy perfect health. The defects when recognized become problems to be remedied by actions, institutions, checks, and restraints that are themselves informed by the principle or ideal of democracy. The remedies are of course imperfect, fallible, and unguaranteed. But we do not therefore reject them. We continue to improve them—if we are democrats. And we test by the fruits of the process the validity of the unrealizable democratic principle that serves as our functional guide.

Mosca, Pareto, and Michels make much of the fact that when power is delegated in a democracy and when political organizations arise, as they must in a society sufficiently complex, the decisions of the government may reflect the interests of the governors more than the interests of the governed. This is indisputable true.

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis of this definition, see *ibid.*, p. 285.

What follows? Not that democracy is impossible but that it is difficult. It is more difficult under certain social and historical conditions than under others. But as long as we hold to democratic principles, again the remedies consist in thinking up of specific mechanisms, devices, and checks which (1) increase the *participation* of the governed in the processes of government, (2) decrease the *concentrations* of powers—educational, religious, economic, political—in the hands of the governors, and (3) provide for the renewal or withdrawal of the mandates of power by the governed. Again, the remedies may be defective. But if we believe that those whose interests are affected by the policies of government should have a voice in determining those policies, either directly, or indirectly by controlling the makers of policy, the *direction* which the never-ending task of democratizing the social process must take is clear. Whether it does take that direction depends greatly upon us.

That there will always be a governing élite to administer government is true. There will also always be a medical élite to minister to our health. The governing élite will always have more power for good or evil than the medical élite. But it need not be more permanent or even as permanent as the medical élite. So long as the governing élite operates within a framework of a democracy, we have a choice between élites. Where élites must contend with out-élites, the victor must pay a price to the governed for victory. How high the price is depends in part at least on how much the governed ask.<sup>4</sup>

The great limitation of the thought of Mosca, Pareto, and Michels is their failure to appreciate the differential advantages of the specific institutions available in a democracy that enable us both to select élites and to curb them. They overlook

<sup>4</sup> "For the working masses every 'final victory' proclaimed by their victorious leaders, even if it is a real step forward, can be only another starting point in their endless struggle for more and always more" Max Nomad, in his "Masters—Old and New," *The Making of Society*, edited by V. F. Calverton, p. 892.

the concrete ways in which the governed through pressure groups, strikes, public debates, committee hearings, radio discussion, letters and telegrams to newspapers and their representatives, petitions, mass meetings, primaries, and elections actually contribute to moulding the basic policies and decisions of the government in a democracy.<sup>5</sup>

The crux of the issue raised by the contention that democracy is impossible because power is exercised by an organized minority may best be met by asking the following questions: Can a democracy get rid of its ruling élite? Can a democracy rid itself of a governing élite more easily or at a lesser cost than a nondemocratic society? There can hardly be any doubt about the answers. The evidence of politics and history shows that democracy can and has rid itself of governing élites, and that it can do so more easily than is generally possible in non-democratic societies. That in consequence one élite is replaced by another is a feature of the political process in a complex society, not an indictment of democracy or a proof of its impossibility. Sufficient unto the day is the problem thereof!

Behind the facade of logical argument in the writings of Mosca, Pareto, and Michels are two significant assumptions. The first is that human nature has a fixed and unalterable character from which it can be predicted that democracy in action must fail, not in the innocent sense that a perfect democracy cannot be realized, but in the sense that a working democracy *cannot be bettered* from the standpoint of its own ideal. The second assumption is that the amount of freedom and democracy in a society is determined by a *law already known*. Both assumptions are false.

So far as the position of these social philosophers is based upon the constancy of human nature, their entire political wisdom consists in framing a simple alternative to man—rule

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the brief but excellent discussion of Glenn Morrow in *Ethics*, April 1942, pp. 299 ff.; also Arthur Bentley's important but neglected study, *The Process of Government*, Chicago, 1908.

or be ruled! But one does not have to be a Utopian to maintain that nothing in human nature limits us to this simple alternative. For other alternatives must be taken together with it. Who is to rule? Over what? For how long? Under what conditions and restrictions? Here is the place for intelligence, experiment, critical adaptation, and political discovery.

The amount and quality of freedom and democracy in a society are determined by many things—economic organization, education, tradition, religion, to name only a few. *But they depend just as much upon our willingness to fight for them as upon any other thing.*

Democracy is difficult, and it is made more difficult because many who call themselves democrats are totalitarians in disguise. The moral is not to call off the struggle but to struggle all the more.

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## 4. ESSAYS APPEALING TO EMOTION

### To the French People

WINSTON CHURCHILL

FRENCHMEN! For more than thirty years in peace and war I have marched with you, and I am marching still along the same road. Tonight I speak to you at your firesides wherever you may be, or whatever your fortunes are: I repeat the prayer around the *louis d'or*, "*Dieu protège la France.*" Here at home in England, under the fire of the Boche, we do not forget the ties and links that unite us to France, and we are persevering steadfastly and in good heart in the cause of European freedom and fair dealing for the common people of all countries, for which, with you, we drew the sword. When good people get into trouble because they are attacked and heavily smitten by the vile and wicked, they must be very careful not to get at loggerheads with one another. The common enemy is always trying to bring this about, and, of course, in bad luck a lot of things happen which play into the enemy's hands. We must just make the best of things as they come along.

Here in London, which Herr Hitler says he will reduce to ashes, and which his aeroplanes are now bombarding, our people are bearing up unflinchingly. Our Air Force has more than held its own. We are waiting for the long-promised invasion. So are the fishes. But, of course, this for us is only the

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From *Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, by Winston Churchill. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

beginning. Now in 1940, in spite of occasional losses, we have, as ever, command of the seas. In 1941 we shall have the command of the air. Remember what that means. Herr Hitler with his tanks and other mechanical weapons, and also by Fifth Column intrigue with traitors, has managed to subjugate for the time being most of the finest races in Europe, and his little Italian accomplice is trotting along hopefully and hungrily, but rather wearily and very timidly, at his side. They both wish to carve up France and her Empire as if it were a fowl: to one a leg, to another a wing or perhaps part of the breast. Not only the French Empire will be devoured by these two ugly customers, but Alsace-Lorraine will go once again under the German yoke, and Nice, Savoy and Corsica—Napoleon's Corsica—will be torn from the fair realm of France. But Herr Hitler is not thinking only of stealing other people's territories, or flinging gobbets of them to his little confederate. I tell you truly what you must believe when I say this evil man, this monstrous abortion of hatred and defeat, is resolved on nothing less than the complete wiping out of the French nation, and the disintegration of its whole life and future. By all kinds of sly and savage means, he is plotting and working to quench for ever the fountain of characteristic French culture and of French inspiration to the world. All Europe, if he has his way, will be reduced to one uniform Boche-land, to be exploited, pillaged, and bullied by his Nazi gangsters. You will excuse my speaking frankly because this is not a time to mince words. It is not defeat that France will now be made to suffer at German hands, but the doom of complete obliteration. Army, Navy, Air Force, religion, law, language, culture, institutions, literature, history, tradition—all are to be effaced by the brute strength of a triumphant Army and the scientific low cunning of a ruthless Police Force.

Frenchmen—rearm your spirits before it is too late. Remember how Napoleon said before one of his battles: "These same Prussians who are so boastful today were three to one at



Jena, and six to one at Montmirail." Never will I believe that the soul of France is dead. Never will I believe that her place amongst the greatest nations of the world has been lost for ever! All these schemes and crimes of Herr Hitler's are bringing upon him and upon all who belong to his system a retribution which many of us will live to see. The story is not yet finished, but it will not be so long. We are on his track, and so are our friends across the Atlantic Ocean, and your friends across the Atlantic Ocean. If he cannot destroy us, we will surely destroy him and all his gang, and all their works. Therefore, have hope and faith, for all will come right.

Now, what is it we British ask of you in this present hard and bitter time? What we ask at this moment in our struggle to win the victory which we will share with you, is that if you cannot help us, at least you will not hinder us. Presently you will be able to weight the arm that strikes for you, and you ought to do so. But even now we believe that Frenchmen, wherever they may be, feel their hearts warm and a proud blood tingle in their veins when we have some success in the air or on the sea, or presently—for that will come—upon the land.

Remember we shall never stop, never weary, and never give in, and that our whole people and Empire have vowed themselves to the task of cleansing Europe from the Nazi pestilence and saving the world from the new Dark Ages. Do not imagine, as the German-controlled wireless tells you, that we English seek to take your ships and colonies. We seek to beat the life and soul out of Hitler and Hitlerism. That alone, that all the time, that to the end. We do not covet anything from any nation except their respect. Those French who are in the French Empire, and those who are in so-called unoccupied France, may see their way from time to time to useful action. I will not go into details. Hostile ears are listening. As for those to whom English hearts go out in full, because they see them under the sharp discipline, oppression, and spying of the Hun—as to

those Frenchmen in the occupied regions—to them I say, when they think of the future let them remember the words which Thiers, that great Frenchman, uttered after 1870 about the future of France and what was to come: “Think of it always: speak of it never.”

Good night, then: sleep to gather strength for the morning. For the morning will come. Brightly will it shine on the brave and true, kindly upon all who suffer for the cause, glorious upon the tombs of heroes. Thus will shine the dawn. *Vive la France!* Long live also the forward march of the common people in all the lands towards their just and true inheritance, and towards the broader and fuller age.

#### COMMENT

The general purpose of the essays in this subsection is the same as that of the essays by Whitehead, Lincoln, and Hook: to persuade us to accept some particular interpretation and evaluation of an aspect of human experience. But where those essays appealed for the most part to our reason, these frankly appeal primarily to our feelings.

Attacked from every side by advertising and by political and ideological propagandas which try to frighten, shame, or flatter us into spending our money and our votes, we have become wary of appeals to our feelings. We tend to think that there is always something more or less dishonest in them, that the motives behind them are perhaps malicious and certainly tinged with a good deal of self-interest. We are inclined to distrust strongly moving language unless it is conspicuously labeled “poetry” or “fiction.”

Undoubtedly the power of words to sway us has been fearfully abused. In explaining why no society can be a perfect democracy, Sidney Hook noted that its members may be in bondage to rhetoric when they should be free to give a carefully detached and logical examination to facts appearing to give an unbiased account while slyly arranging the order of the ideas and slipping in unobtrusive but powerfully connotative words and figures of speech to influence

our judgments. Yet these are times when appeals to our feelings are honest, harmless, and even desirable. When the facts are well-known, when the writer makes no attempt to disguise the nature of his appeal, when he seeks to amuse us with his extravagance as Mencken does, or when, like Churchill, Thoreau, and Lawrence, he tries to urge us to action in what he believes is a good cause whose merits he is perfectly willing to argue, then we may read without distrust (though not without caution) and respond as far as our reason, remembering the facts, will permit us. No writer can fairly ask us to do more.

Obviously, the foregoing essay was written for a special occasion. In the spring of 1940, the armies of England and France had been overrun by the Germans. Soon after, the British were evacuated at Dunkirk, and Marshal Pétain sued for peace. To keep French warships out of the hands of the Nazis, the British were compelled to shell those lying at Oran and to assume command of those lying in British waters. Immediately the German Ministry of Propaganda began a campaign to convince the French people that the British had turned on them. This campaign was intensified in October of 1940 when the Royal Navy bombarded the French port of Cherbourg, which was being used by the Germans as a shipping and storage center. To oppose the German propaganda, to remind the French people of England's devotion to their common cause, and to cheer them in their fight to keep their nation alive, Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England, wrote this essay in English and French and broadcast it on October 21. Though addressed to the French people, it is clearly designed to rally the spirits of Englishmen as well.

In judging it we must be careful to remember its intended audience, which consisted of people who had suffered a terrible defeat and people who confronted a defeat perhaps even more terrible. Such an audience would hardly require facts and reasons, which would be all too familiar. It would be too weary for subtleties and likely to be apathetic toward novelties of expression since it had lived through indescribable novelties of terror, suffering, and grief. Indeed, it would respond best to the familiar, the commonplace, the unchanging, for under the circumstances these would be unfamiliar and uncommon in a world in which everything seemed changed. It was an audience

awakened by experience to the meanings originally contained in words and phrases that had become stereotyped and platitudinous. Thus one could use such a seemingly worn-out expression as "We must just make the best of things as they come along," since, by doing just that, the audience itself had revitalized these words so that they, and similar clichés and stock phrases, would carry a tremendous punch. Grave faults of writing on almost every other occasion, these expressions were appropriate to the purpose and acceptable on this rare one.

Writing for this audience, then, Churchill can speak of the "ties and links that unite" those who "drew the sword" against "brute force" and "scientific low cunning" of a "ruthless Police Force." He believes that the French "feel their hearts warm and a proud blood tingle in their veins" when they hear of British victories, and he promises his audience that "The story is not yet finished," for the British are "on his [Hitler's] track." Elsewhere his language mixes the sonorities of the Parliamentary speaker remembering Shakespeare, the King James Bible, and Edmund Burke ("we are preserving steadfastly and in good heart the cause of European freedom and fair dealing . . . heavily smitten by the vile and wicked") with the colloquial language of an old political campaigner ("at loggerheads with one another"); and the mixture succeeds, though there are ludicrous bits such as the combination of "two ugly customers" with "torn from the fair realm of France."<sup>1</sup> Connotations are heavily worked; the Germans are "the Boche," "the Hun," and "Nazi gangsters"; Mussolini is made to seem less dangerous than absurd when pictured as Hitler's "little accomplice, trotting along hopefully and hungrily"; while greedy violence is suggested in the image of Hitler "flinging gobbets" of conquered countries to his "little confederate." No convention or institution that will play on the patriotism of the audience is neglected: comrades "marching together . . . under fire," the fireside, the "tombs of heroes," the dawn, Napoleon, Thiers, the "fountain of French

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to see how much humor H. L. Mencken, writing on a wholly different occasion for a wholly different audience, wrings from clichés, stereotypes, and an ironic mixture of fine language and slang. Often it is only the purpose and situation that decide whether a phrase or device of tone is eloquent or amusingly bombastic.

culture," and "religions, law, language, culture, institutions, history, tradition." Finally, rhythms are used effectively in "Remember we shall never stop, never weary, never give in," and in "That alone, that all the time, that to the end," with their resounding accents and parallel yet skillfully varied cadences.

If we study this essay without considering the specific purpose for which it was written, we see that it falls short of some standards of good prose. (No work pretending to be literary art could get away with so many clichés unless they were used "in character" or for a humorous or ironic effect.) But if we remember its occasion, we can see how it would be an effective appeal to feelings when such appeals could help to save a nation and turn disaster into victory.

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## *A Plea for Captain John Brown*

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

I TRUST that you will pardon me for being here. I do not wish to force my thoughts upon you, but I feel forced myself. Little as I know of Captain Brown, I would fain do my part to correct the tone and the statements of the newspapers, and of my countrymen generally, respecting his character and actions. It costs us nothing to be just. We can at least express our sympathy with, and admiration of, him and his companions, and that is what I now propose to do.

First, as to his history. I will endeavor to omit, as much as possible, what you have already read. I need not describe his person to you, for probably most of you have seen and will not soon forget him. I am told that his grandfather, John Brown, was an officer in the Revolution; that he himself was born in Connecticut about the beginning of this century, but early went with his father to Ohio. I heard him say that his father was a contractor who furnished beef to the army there, in the war of 1812; that he accompanied him to the camp, and assisted him in that employment, seeing a good deal of military life,—more, perhaps, than if he had been a soldier; for he was often present at the councils of the officers. Especially, he learned by experience how armies are supplied and maintained in the field,—a work which, he observed, requires at least as much experience and skill as to lead them in battle. He said that few persons had any conception of the cost, even

the pecuniary cost, of firing a single bullet in war. He saw enough, at any rate, to disgust him with a military life; indeed, to excite in him a great abhorrence of it; so much so, that though he was tempted by the offer of some petty officer in the army, when he was about eighteen, he not only declined that, but he also refused to train when warned, and was fined for it. He then resolved that he would never have anything to do with any war, unless it were a war for liberty.

When the troubles in Kansas began, he sent several of his sons thither to strengthen the party of the Free State men, fitting them out with such weapons as he had; telling them that if the troubles should increase, and there should be any need of him, he would follow, to assist them with his hand and his counsel. This, as you all know, he soon after did; and it was through his agency, far more than any other's, that Kansas was made free.

For a part of his life he was a surveyor, and at one time he was engaged in wool-growing, and he went to Europe as an agent about that business. There, as everywhere, he had his eyes about him, and made many original observations. He said, for instance, that he saw why the soil of England was so rich, and that of Germany (I think it was) so poor, and he thought of writing to some of the crowned heads about it. It was because in England the peasantry live on the soil which they cultivate, but in Germany they are gathered into villages at night. It is a pity that he did not make a book of his observations.

I should say that he was an old-fashioned man in his respect for the Constitution, and his faith in the permanence of this Union. Slavery he deemed to be wholly opposed to these, and he was its determined foe.

He was by descent and birth a New England farmer, a man of great common sense, deliberate and practical as that class is, and tenfold more so. He was like the best of those who stood at Concord Bridge once, on Lexington Common, and on

Bunker Hill, only he was firmer and higher principled than any that I have chanced to hear of as there. It was no abolition lecturer that converted him. Ethan Allen and Stark, with whom he may in some respects be compared, were rangers in a lower and less important field. They could bravely face their country's foes, but he had the courage to face his country herself when she was in the wrong. A Western writer says, to account for his escape from so many perils, that he was concealed under a "rural exterior"; as if, in that prairie land, a hero should, by good rights, wear a citizen's dress only.

He did not go to the college called Harvard, good old Alma Mater as she is. He was not fed on the pap that is there furnished. As he phrased it, "I know no more of grammar than one of your calves." But he went to the great university of the West, where he sedulously pursued the study of Liberty, for which he had early betrayed a fondness, and having taken many degrees, he finally commenced the public practice of Humanity in Kansas, as you all know. Such were his humanities, and not any study of grammar. He would have left a Greek accent slanting the wrong way, and righted up a falling man.

He was one of that class of whom we hear a great deal, but, for the most part, see nothing at all,—the Puritans. It would be in vain to kill him. He died lately in the time of Cromwell, but he reappeared here. Why should he not? Some of the Puritan stock are said to have come over and settled in New England. They were a class that did something else than celebrate their forefathers' day, and eat parched corn in remembrance of that time. They were neither Democrats nor Republicans, but men of simple habits, straightforward, prayerful; not thinking much of rulers who did not fear God, not making many compromises, nor seeking after available candidates.

"In his camp," as one has recently written, and as I have myself heard him state, "he permitted no profanity; no man of loose morals was suffered to remain there, unless, indeed, as a



prisoner of war. 'I would rather,' said he, 'have the small-pox, yellow fever, and cholera, all together in my camp, than a man without principle. . . . It is a mistake, sir, that our people make, when they think that bullies are the best fighters, or that they are the fit men to oppose these Southerners. Give me men of good principles,—God-fearing men,—men who respect themselves, and with a dozen of them I will oppose any hundred such men as these Buford ruffians.' " He said that if one offered himself to be a soldier under him, who was forward to tell what he could or would do if he could only get sight of the enemy, he had but little confidence in him.

He was never able to find more than a score or so of recruits whom he would accept, and only about a dozen, among them his sons in whom he had perfect faith. When he was here, some years ago, he showed to a few a little manuscript book, —his "orderly book" I think he called it, —containing the names of his company in Kansas, and the rules by which they bound themselves; and he stated that several of them had already sealed the contract with their blood. When some one remarked that, with the addition of a chaplain, it would have been a perfect Cromwellian troop, he observed that he would have been glad to add a chaplain to the list, if he could have found one who could fill that office worthily. It is easy enough to find one for the United States army. I believe that he had prayers in his camp morning and evening, nevertheless.

He was a man of Spartan habits, and at sixty was scrupulous about his diet at your table, excusing himself by saying that he must eat sparingly and fare hard, as became a soldier, or one who was fitting himself for difficult enterprises, a life of exposure.

A man of rare common sense and directness of speech, as of action; a transcendentalist above all, a man of ideas and principles,—that was what distinguished him. Not yielding to a whim or transient impulse, but carrying out the purpose of a life. I noticed that he did not overstate anything, but spoke

within bounds. I remember, particularly, how, in his speech here, he referred to what his family had suffered in Kansas, without ever giving the least vent to his pent-up fire. It was a volcano with an ordinary chimney-flue. Also referring to the deeds of certain Border Ruffians, he said, rapidly paring away his speech, like an experienced soldier, keeping a reserve of force and meaning, "They had a perfect right to be hung." He was not in the least a rhetorician, was not talking to Buncombe or his constituents anywhere, had no need to invent anything but to tell the simple truth, and communicate his own resolution; therefore he appeared incomparably strong, and eloquence in Congress and elsewhere seemed to me at a discount. It was like the speeches of Cromwell compared with those of an ordinary king.

As for his tact and prudence, I will merely say, that at a time when scarcely a man from the Free States was able to reach Kansas by any direct route, at least without having his arms taken from him, he, carrying what imperfect guns and other weapons he could collect, openly and slowly drove an ox-cart through Missouri, apparently in the capacity of a surveyor, with his surveying compass exposed in it, and so passed unsuspected, and had ample opportunity to learn the designs of the enemy. For some time after his arrival he still followed the same profession. When, for instance, he saw a knot of the ruffians on the prairie, discussing, of course, the single topic which then occupied their minds, he would, perhaps, take his compass and one of his sons, and proceed to run an imaginary line right through the very spot on which that conclave had assembled, and when he came up to them, he would naturally pause and have some talk with them, learning their news, and, at last, all their plans perfectly; and having thus completed his real survey he would resume his imaginary one, and run on his line till he was out of sight.

When I expressed surprise that he could live in Kansas at all, with a price set upon his head, and so large a number, in-

cluding the authorities, exasperated against him, he accounted for it by saying, "It is perfectly well understood that I will not be taken." Much of the time for some years he has had to skulk in swamps, suffering from poverty and from sickness, which was the consequence of exposure, befriended only by Indians and a few whites. But though it might be known that he was lurking in a particular swamp, his foes commonly did not care to go in after him. He could even come out into a town where there were more Border Ruffians than Free State men, and transact some business, without delaying long, and yet not be molested; for, said he, "no little handful of men were willing to undertake it, and a large body could not be got together in season."

As for his recent failure, we do not know the facts about it. It was evidently far from being a wild and desperate attempt. His enemy, Mr. Vallandigham, is compelled to say that "it was among the best planned and executed conspiracies that ever failed."

Not to mention his other successes, was it a failure, or did it show a want of good management, to deliver from bondage a dozen human beings, and walk off with them by broad daylight, for weeks if not months, at a leisurely pace, through one State after another, for half the length of the North, conspicuous to all parties, with a price set upon his head, going into a court-room on his way and telling what he had done, thus convincing Missouri that it was not profitable to try to hold slaves in his neighborhood?—and this, not because the government menials were lenient, but because they were afraid of him.

Yet he did not attribute his success, foolishly, to "his star," or to any magic. He said, truly, that the reason why such greatly superior numbers quailed before him was, as one of his prisoners confessed, because they lacked a cause,—a kind of armor which he and his party never lacked. When the time came, few men were found willing to lay down their lives in

defense of what they knew to be wrong; they did not like that this should be their last act in this world.

But to make haste to *his* last act, and its effects.

The newspapers seem to ignore, or perhaps are really ignorant, of the fact that there are at least as many as two or three individuals to a town throughout the North who think much as the present speaker does about him and his enterprise. I do not hesitate to say that they are an important and growing party. We aspire to be something more than stupid and timid chattels, pretending to read history and our Bibles, but desecrating every house and every day we breathe in. Perhaps anxious, politicians may prove that only seventeen white men and five negroes were concerned in the late enterprise; but their very anxiety to prove this might suggest to themselves that all is not told. Why do they still dodge the truth? They are so anxious because of a dim consciousness of the fact, which they do not distinctly face, that at least a million of the free inhabitants of the United States would have rejoiced if it had succeeded. They at most only criticise the tactics. Though we wear no crape, the thought of that man's position and probable fate is spoiling many a man's day here at the North for other thinking. If any one who has seen him here can pursue successfully any other train of thought, I do not know what he is made of. If there is any such who gets his usual allowance of sleep, I will warrant him to fatten easily under any circumstances which do not touch his body or purse. I put a piece of paper and a pencil under my pillow, and when I could not sleep I wrote in the dark.

On the whole, my respect for my fellow-men, except as one may outweigh a million, is not being increased these days. I have noticed the cold-blooded way in which newspaper writers and men generally speak of this event, as if an ordinary malefactor, though one of unusual "pluck,"—as the Governor of Virginia is reported to have said, using the language of the cock-pit, "the gamest man he ever saw,"—had been caught,

and were about to be hung. He was not dreaming of his foes when the governor thought he looked so brave. It turns what sweetness I have to gall, to hear, or hear of, the remarks of some of my neighbors. When we heard at first that he was dead, one of my townsmen observed that "he died as the fool dieth"; which, pardon me, for an instant suggested a likeness in him dying to my neighbor living. Others, craven-hearted, said disparagingly, that "he threw his life away," because he resisted the government. Which way have they thrown *their* lives, pray?—such as would praise a man for attacking singly an ordinary band of thieves or murderers. I hear another ask, Yankee-like, "What will he gain by it?" as if he expected to fill his pockets by this enterprise. Such a one has no idea of gain but in this worldly sense. If it does not lead to a "surprise" party, if he does not get a new pair of boots, or a vote of thanks, it must be a failure. "But he won't gain anything by it." Well, no, I don't suppose he could get four-and-sixpence a day for being hung, take the year round; but then he stands a chance to save a considerable part of his soul,—and *such* a soul!—when *you* do not. No doubt you can get more in your market for a quart of milk than for a quart of blood, but that is not the market that heroes carry their blood to.

Such do not know that like the seed is the fruit, and that, in the moral world, when good seed is planted, good fruit is inevitable, and does not depend on our watering and cultivating; that when you plant, or bury, a hero in his field, a crop of heroes is sure to spring up. This is a seed of such force and vitality, that it does not ask our leave to germinate.

The momentary charge at Balaklava, in obedience to a blundering command, proving what a perfect machine the soldier is, has, properly enough, been celebrated by a poet laureate; but the steady, and for the most part successful, charge of this man, for some years, against the legions of Slavery, in obedience to an infinitely higher command, is as much more memorable than that as an intelligent and conscientious man is

superior to a machine. Do you think that that will go unsung?

"Served him right,"—"A dangerous man,"—"He is undoubtedly insane." So they proceed to live their sane, and wise, and altogether admirable lives, reading their Plutarch a little, but chiefly pausing at that feat of Putnam, who was let down into a wolf's den; and in this wise they nourish themselves for brave and patriotic deeds some time or other. The Tract Society could afford to print that story of Putnam. You might open the district schools with the reading of it, for there is nothing about Slavery or the Church in it; unless it occurs to the reader that some pastors are wolves in sheep's clothing. "The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," even, might dare to protest against that wolf. I have heard of boards, and of American boards, but it chances that I never heard of this particular lumber till lately. And yet I hear of Northern men, and women, and children, by families, buying a "life-membership" in such societies as these. A life-membership in the grave! You can get buried cheaper than that.

Our foes are in our midst and all about us. There is hardly a house but is divided against itself, for our foe is the all but universal woodenness of both head and heart, the want of vitality in man, which is the effect of our vice; and hence are begotten fear, superstition, bigotry, persecution, and slavery of all kinds. We are mere figure-heads upon a hulk, with livers in the place of hearts. The curse is the worship of idols, which at length changes the worshiper into a stone image himself; and the New Englander is just as much an idolater as the Hindoo. This man was an exception, for he did not set up even a political graven image between him and his God.

A church that can never have done with excommunicating Christ while it exists! Away with your broad and flat churches, and your narrow and tall churches! Take a step forward, and invent a new style of out-houses. Invent a salt that will save you, and defend our nostrils.

The modern Christian is a man who has consented to say

all the prayers in the liturgy, provided you will let him go straight to bed and sleep quietly afterward. All his prayers begin with "Now I lay me down to sleep," and he is forever looking forward to the time when he shall go to his "*long rest*." He has consented to perform certain old-established charities, too, after a fashion, but he does not wish to hear of any new-fangled ones; he doesn't wish to have any supplementary articles added to the contract, to fit it to the present time. He shows the whites of his eyes on the Sabbath, and the blacks all the rest of the week. The evil is not merely a stagnation of blood, but a stagnation of spirit. Many, no doubt, are well disposed, but sluggish by constitution and by habit, and they cannot conceive of a man who is actuated by higher motives than they are. Accordingly they pronounce this man insane, for they know that *they* could never act as he does, as long as they are themselves.

We dream of foreign countries, of other times and races of men, placing them at a distance in history or space; but let some significant event like the present occur in our midst, and we discover, often, this distance and this strangeness between us and our nearest neighbors. *They* are our Austrias, and Chinas, and South Sea Islands. Our crowded society becomes well spaced all at once, clean and handsome to the eye,—a city of magnificent distances. We discover why it was that we never got beyond compliments and surfaces with them before; we become aware of as many versts between us and them as here are between a wandering Tartar and a Chinese town. The thoughtful man becomes a hermit in the thoroughfares of the market-place. Impassable seas suddenly find their level between us, or dumb steppes stretch themselves out there. It is the difference of constitution, of intelligence, and faith, and not streams and mountains, that make the true and impassable boundaries between individuals and between states. None but the like-minded can come plenipotentiary to our court.

I read all the newspapers I could get within a week after this

event, and I do not remember in them a single expression of sympathy for these men. I have since seen one noble statement, in a Boston paper, not editorial. Some voluminous sheets decided not to print the full report of Brown's words to the exclusion of other matter. It was as if a publisher should reject the manuscript of the New Testament, and print Wilson's last speech. The same journal which contained this pregnant news was chiefly filled, in parallel columns, with the reports of the political conventions that were being held. But the descent to them was too steep. They should have been spared this contrast,—been printed in an extra, at least. To turn from the voices and deeds of earnest men to the cackling of political conventions! Office-seekers and speech-makers, who do not so much as lay an honest egg, but wear their breasts bare upon an egg of chalk! Their great game is the game of straws, or rather that universal aboriginal game of the platter, at which the Indians cried *hub, hub!* Exclude the reports of religious and political conventions, and publish the words of a living man.

But I object not so much to what they have omitted as to what they have inserted. Even the *Liberator* called it "a misguided, wild, and apparently insane effort." As for the herd of newspapers and magazines, I do not chance to know an editor in the country who will deliberately print anything which he knows will ultimately and permanently reduce the number of his subscribers. They do not believe that it would be expedient. How then can they print truth? If we do not say pleasant things, they argue, nobody will attend to us. And so they do like some traveling auctioneers, who sing an obscene song, in order to draw a crowd around them. Republican editors, obliged to get their sentences ready for the morning edition, and accustomed to look at everything by the twilight of politics, express no admiration, nor true sorrow even, but call these men "deluded fanatics,"—"mistaken men,"—"insane," or "crazed." It suggests what a *sane* set of editors we are blessed



with, *not* "mistaken men"; who know very well on which side their bread is buttered, at least.

A man does a brave and humane deed, and at once, on all sides, we hear people and parties declaring, "I didn't do it, nor countenance *him* to do it, in any conceivable way. It can't be fairly inferred from my past career." I, for one, am not interested to hear you define your position. I don't know that I ever was or ever shall be. I think it is mere egotism, or impertinent at this time. Ye needn't take so much pains to wash your skirts of him. No intelligent man will ever be convinced that he was any creature of yours. He went and came, as he himself informs us, "under the auspices of John Brown and nobody else." The Republican party does not perceive how many his *failure* will make to vote more correctly than they would have them. They have counted the votes of Pennsylvania & Co., but they have not correctly counted Captain Brown's vote. He has taken the wind out of their sails,—the little wind they had,—and they may as well lie to and repair.

What though he did not belong to your clique! Though you may not approve of his method or his principles, recognize his magnanimity. Would you not like to claim kindredship with him in that, though in no other thing he is like, or likely, to you? Do you think that you would lose your reputation so? What you lost at the spile, you would gain at the bung.

If they do not mean all this, then they do not speak the truth, and say what they mean. They are simply at their old tricks still.

"It was always conceded to him," says *one who calls him crazy*, "that he was a conscientious man, very modest in his demeanor, apparently inoffensive, until the subject of Slavery was introduced, when he would exhibit a feeling of indignation unparalleled."

The slave-ship is on her way, crowded with its dying victims; new cargoes are being added in mid-ocean; a small crew of slaveholders, countenanced by a large body of passengers, is

smothering four millions under the hatches, and yet the politician asserts that the only proper way by which deliverance is to be obtained is by "the quiet diffusion of the sentiments of humanity," without any "outbreak." As if the sentiments of humanity were ever found unaccompanied by its deeds, and you could disperse them, all finished to order, the pure article, as easily as water with a watering-pot, and so lay the dust. What is that that I hear cast over-board? The bodies of the dead that have found deliverance. That is the way we are "diffusing" humanity, and its sentiments with it.

Prominent and influential editors, accustomed to deal with politicians, men of an infinitely lower grade, say, in their ignorance, that he acted "on the principle of revenge." They do not know the man. They must enlarge themselves to conceive of him. I have no doubt that the time will come when they will begin to see him as he was. They have got to conceive of a man of faith and of religious principle, and not a politician or an Indian; of a man who did not wait till he was personally interfered with or thwarted in some harmless business before he gave his life to the cause of the oppressed.

If Walker may be considered the representative of the South, I wish I could say that Brown was the representative of the North. He was a superior man. He did not value his bodily life in comparison with ideal things. He did not recognize unjust human laws, but resisted them as he was bid. For once we are lifted out of the trivialness and dust of politics into the region of truth and manhood. No man in America has ever stood up so persistently and effectively for the dignity of human nature, knowing himself for a man, and the equal of any and all governments. In that sense he was the most American of us all. He needed no babbling lawyer, making false issues, to defend him. He was more than a match for all the judges that American voters, or office-holders of whatever grade, can create. He could not have been tried by a jury of his peers, because his peers did not exist. When a man stands up serenely against

the condemnation and vengeance of mankind, rising above them literally *by a whole body*,—even though he were of late the vilest murderer, who has settled that matter with himself,—the spectacle is a sublime one,—didn't ye know it, ye *Liberators*, ye *Tribunes*, ye *Republicans*?—and we become criminal in comparison. Do yourselves the honor to recognize him. He needs none of your respect.

As for the Democratic journals, they are not human enough to affect me at all. I do not feel indignation at anything they may say.

I am aware that I anticipate a little,—that he was still, at the last accounts, alive in the hands of his foes; but that being the case, I have all along found myself thinking and speaking of him as physically dead.

I do not believe in erecting statues to those who still live in our hearts, whose bones have not yet crumbled in the earth around us, but I would rather see the statue of Captain Brown in the Massachusetts State-House yard than that of any other man whom I know. I rejoice that I live in this age, that I am his contemporary.

What a contrast, when we turn to that political party which is so anxiously shuffling him and his plot out of its way, and looking around for some available slaveholder, perhaps, to be its candidate, at least for one who will execute the Fugitive Slave Law, and all those other unjust laws which he took up arms to annul!

Insane! A father and six sons, and one son-in-law, and several more men besides,—as many at least as twelve disciples,—all struck with insanity at once; while the same tyrant holds with a firmer gripe than ever his four millions of slaves, and a thousand sane editors, his abettors, are saving their country and their bacon! Just as insane were his efforts in Kansas. Ask the tyrant who is his most dangerous foe, the sane man or the insane? Do the thousands who know him best, who have rejoiced at his deeds in Kansas, and have afforded him material

aid there, think him insane? Such a use of this word is a mere trope with most who persist in using it, and I have no doubt that many of the rest have already in silence retracted their words.

Read his admirable answers to Mason and others. How they are dwarfed and defeated by the contrast! On the one side, half-brutish, half-timid questioning; on the other, truth, clear as lightning, crashing into their obscene temples. They are made to stand with Pilate, and Gessler, and the Inquisition. How ineffectual their speech and action! and what a void their silence! They are but helpless tools in this great work. It was no human power that gathered them about this preacher.

What have Massachusetts and the North sent a few *sane* representatives to Congress for, of late years?—to declare with effect what kind of sentiments? All their speeches put together and boiled down—and probably they themselves will confess it—do not match for manly directness and force, and for simple truth, the few casual remarks of crazy John Brown on the floor of the Harper's Ferry engine-house,—that man whom you are about to hang, to send to the other world, though not to represent you there. No, he was not our representative in any sense. He was too fair a specimen of a man to represent the like of us. Who, then, *were* his constituents? If you read his words understandingly you will find out. In his case there is no idle eloquence, no made, nor maiden speech, no compliments to the oppressor. Truth is his inspirer, and earnestness the polisher of his sentences. He could afford to lose his Sharps rifles, while he retained his faculty of speech,—a Sharps rifle of infinitely surer and longer range.

And the New York *Herald* reports the conversation *verbatim*! It does not know of what undying words it is made the vehicle.

I have no respect for the penetration of any man who can read the report of that conversation and still call the principal in it insane. It has the ring of a saner sanity than ordinary dis-

cipline and habits of life, than an ordinary organization, secure. Take any sentence of it,—“Any questions that I can honorably answer, I will; not otherwise. So far as I am myself concerned, I have told everything truthfully. I value my word, sir.” The few who talk about his vindictive spirit, while they really admire his heroism, have no test by which to detect a noble man, no amalgam to combine with his pure gold. They mix their own dross with it.

It is a relief to turn from these slanders to the testimony of his more truthful, but frightened jailers and hangmen. Governor Wise speaks far more justly and appreciatingly of him than any Northern editor, or politician, or public personage, that I chance to have heard from. I know that you can afford to hear him again on this subject. He says: “They are themselves mistaken who take him to be a madman. . . . He is cool, collected, and indomitable, and it is but just to him to say that he was humane to his prisoners. . . . And he inspired me with great trust in his integrity as a man of truth. He is a fanatic, vain and garrulous” (I leave that part to Mr. Wise), “but firm, truthful, and intelligent. His men, too, who survive, are like him. . . . Colonel Washington says that he was the coolest and firmest man he ever saw in defying danger and death. With one son dead by his side, and another shot through, he felt the pulse of his dying son with one hand, and held his rifle with the other, and commanded his men with the utmost composure, encouraging them to be firm, and to sell their lives as dear as they could. Of the three white prisoners, Brown, Stevens, and Coppoc, it was hard to say which was most firm.”

Almost the first Northern men whom the slaveholder has learned to respect!

The testimony of Mr. Vallandigham, though less valuable, is of the same purport, that “it is vain to underrate either the man or his conspiracy. . . . He is the farthest possible removed from the ordinary ruffian, fanatic, or madman.”

“All is quiet at Harpers Ferry,” say the journals. What

is the character of that calm which follows when the law and the slaveholder prevail? I regard this event as a touchstone designed to bring out, with glaring distinctness, the character of this government. We needed to be thus assisted to see it by the light of history. It needed to see itself. When a government puts forth its strength on the side of injustice, as ours to maintain slavery and kill the liberators of the slave, it reveals itself a merely brute force, or worse, a demoniacal force. It is the head of the Plug-Uglies. It is more manifest than ever that tyranny rules. I see this government to be effectually allied with France and Austria in oppressing mankind. There sits a tyrant holding fettered four millions of slaves; here comes their heroic liberator. This most hypocritical and diabolical government looks up from its seat on the gasping four millions, and inquires with an assumption of innocence: "What do you assault me for? Am I not an honest man? Cease agitation on this subject, or I will make a slave of you, too, or else hang you."

We talk about a *representative* government; but what a monster of a government is that where the noblest faculties of the mind, and the *whole* heart, are not *represented*. A semi-human tiger or ox, stalking over the earth, with its heart taken out and the top of its brain shot away. Heroes have fought well on their stumps when their legs were shot off, but I never heard of any good done by such a government as that.

The only government that I recognize—and it matters not how few are at the head of it, or how small its army—is that power that establishes justice in the land, never that which establishes injustice. What shall we think of a government to which all the truly brave and just men in the land are enemies, standing between it and those whom it oppresses? A government that pretends to be Christian and crucifies a million Christs every day!

Treason! Where does such treason take its rise? I cannot help thinking of you as you deserve, ye governments. Can you dry

up the fountains of thought? High treason, when it is resistance to tyranny here below, has its origin in, and is first committed by, the power that makes and forever recreates man. When you have caught and hung all these human rebels, you have accomplished nothing but your own guilt, for you have not struck at the fountain-head. You presume to contend with a foe against whom West Point cadets and rifled cannon *point* not. Can all the art of the cannon-founder tempt matter to turn against its maker? Is the form in which the founder thinks he casts it more essential than the constitution of it and of himself?

The United States have a coffle of four millions of slaves. They are determined to keep them in this condition; and Massachusetts is one of the confederated overseers to prevent their escape. Such are not all the inhabitants of Massachusetts, but such are they who rule and are obeyed here. It was Massachusetts, as well as Virginia, that put down this insurrection at Harpers Ferry. She sent the marines there, and she will have to pay the penalty of her sin.

Suppose that there is a society in this State that out of its own purse and magnanimity saves all the fugitive slaves that run to us, and protects our colored fellow-citizens, and leaves the other work to the government, so called. Is not that government fast losing its occupation, and becoming contemptible to mankind? If private men are obliged to perform the offices of government, to protect the weak and dispense justice, then the government becomes only a hired man, or clerk, to perform menial or indifferent services. Of course, that is but the shadow of a government whose existence necessitates a Vigilant Committee. What should we think of the Oriental Cadi even, behind whom worked in secret a Vigilant Committee? But such is the character of our Northern States generally; each has its Vigilant Committee. And, to a certain extent, these crazy governments recognize and accept this relation. They say, virtually, "We'll be glad to work for you on these terms, only don't make a noise

about it." And thus the government, its salary being insured, withdraws into the back shop, taking the Constitution with it, and bestows most of its labor on repairing that. When I hear it at work sometimes, as I go by, it reminds me, at best, of those farmers who in winter contrive to turn a penny by following the coopering business. And what kind of spirit is their barrel made to hold? They speculate in stocks, and bore holes in mountains, but they are not competent to lay out even a decent highway. The only *free* road, the Underground Railroad, is owned and managed by the ~~Vigilant Committee~~. ~~They~~ have tunneled under the whole breadth of the land. Such a government is losing its power and respectability as surely as water runs out of a leaky vessel, and is held by one that can contain it.

I hear many condemn these men because they were so few. When were the good and the brave ever in a majority? Would you have had him wait till that time came?—till you and I came over to him? The very fact that he had no rabble or troop of hirelings about him would alone distinguish him from ordinary heroes. His company was small indeed, because few could be found worthy to pass muster. Each one who there laid down his life for the poor and oppressed was a picked man, culled out of many thousands, if not millions; apparently a man of principle, of rare courage, and devoted humanity; ready to sacrifice his life at any moment for the benefit of his fellow-man. It may be doubted if there were as many more their equals in these respects in all the country,—I speak of his followers only,—for their leader, no doubt, scoured the land far and wide, seeking to swell his troop. These alone were ready to step between the oppressor and the oppressed. Surely they were the very best men you could select to be hung. That was the greatest compliment which this country could pay them. They were ripe for her gallows. She has tried a long time, she has hung a good many, but never found the right one before.



When I think of him, and his six sons, and his son-in-law, not to enumerate the others, enlisted for this fight, proceeding coolly, reverently, humanely to work, for months if not years, sleeping and waking upon it, summering and wintering the thought, without expecting any reward but a good conscience, while almost all America stood ranked on the other side,—I say again that it affects me as a sublime spectacle. If he had had any journal advocating "*his cause*," any organ, as the phrase is, monotonously and wearisomely playing the same old tune, and then passing round the hat, it would have been fatal to his efficiency. If he had acted in any way so as to be let alone by the government, he might have been suspected. It was the fact that the tyrant must give place to him, or he to the tyrant, that distinguished him from all the reformers of the day that I know.

It was his peculiar doctrine that a man has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slaveholder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him. They who are continually shocked by slavery have some right to be shocked by the violent death of the slaveholder, but no others. Such will be more shocked by his life than by his death. I shall not be forward to think him mistaken in his method who quickest succeeds to liberate the slave. I speak for the slave when I say that I prefer the philanthropy of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which neither shoots me nor liberates me. At any rate, I do not think it is quite sane for one to spend his whole life in talking or writing about this matter, unless he is continuously inspired, and I have not done so. A man may have other affairs to attend to. I do not wish to kill nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both these things would be by me unavoidable. We preserve the so-called peace of our community by deeds of petty violence every day. Look at the policeman's billy and handcuffs! Look at the jail! Look at the gallows! Look at the chaplain of the regiment! We are hoping only to live safely on the outskirts of *this* provisional army. So we

defend ourselves and our hen-roosts, and maintain slavery. I know that the mass of my countrymen think that the only righteous use that can be made of Sharps rifles and revolvers is to fight duels with them, when we are insulted by other nations, or to hunt Indians, or shoot fugitive slaves with them, or the like. I think that for once the Sharps rifles and the revolvers were employed in a righteous cause. The tools were in the hands of one who could use them.

The same indignation that is said to have cleared the temple once will clear it again. The question is not about the weapon, but the spirit in which you use it. No man has appeared in America, as yet, who loved his fellow-man so well, and treated him so tenderly. He lived for him. He took up his life and he laid it down for him. What sort of violence is that which is encouraged, not by soldiers, but by peaceable citizens, not so much by the fighting sects as by the Quakers, and not so much by Quaker men as by Quaker women?

This event advertises me that there is such a fact as death,—  
the possibility of a man's dying. It seems as if no man had ever died in America before; for in order to die you must first have lived. I don't believe in the hearses, and palls, and funerals that they have had. There was no death in the case, because there had been no life; they merely rotted or sloughed off, pretty much as they had rotted or sloughed along. No temple's veil was rent, only a hole dug somewhere. Let the dead bury their dead. The best of them fairly ran down like a clock. Franklin,—Washington,—they were let off without dying; they were merely missing one day. I hear a good many pretend that they are going to die; or that they have died, for aught that I know. Nonsense! I'll defy them to do it. They haven't got life enough in them. They'll deliquesce like fungi, and keep a hundred eulogists mopping the spot where they left off. Only half a dozen or so have died since the world began. Do you think that you are going to die, sir? No! there's no hope of you. You haven't got your lesson yet. You've got to stay

after school. We make a needless ado about capital punishment,—taking lives, when there is no life to take. *Memento mori!* We don't understand that sublime sentence which some worthy got sculptured on his grave-stone once. We've interpreted it in a groveling and sniveling sense; we've wholly forgotten how to die.

But be sure you do die nevertheless. Do your work, and finish it. If you know how to begin, you will know when to end.

~~These men,~~ in teaching us how to die, have at the same time taught us how to live. If this man's acts and words do not create a revival, it will be the severest possible satire on the acts and words that do. It is the best news that America has ever heard. It has already quickened the feeble pulse of the North, and infused more and more generous blood into her veins and heart than any number of years of what is called commercial and political prosperity could. How many a man who was lately contemplating suicide ~~has now something~~ to live for!

One writer says that Brown's peculiar monomania made him to be "dreaded by the Missourians as a supernatural being." Sure enough, a hero in the midst of us cowards is always so dreaded. He is just that thing. He shows himself superior to nature. He has a spark of divinity in him.

Unless above himself he can  
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!

Newspaper editors argue also that it is a proof of his insanity that he thought he was appointed to do this work which he did,—that he did not suspect himself for a moment! They talk as if it were impossible that a man could be "divinely appointed" in these days to do any work whatever; as if vows and religion were out of date as connected with any man's daily work; as if the agent to abolish slavery could only be somebody appointed by the President, or by some political party.

They talk as if a man's death were a failure, and his continued life, be it of whatever character, were a success.

When I reflect to what a cause this man devoted himself, and how religiously, and then reflect to what cause his judges and all who condemn him so angrily and fluently devote themselves, I see that they are as far apart as the heavens and earth are asunder.

The amount of it is, our "leading men" are a harmless kind of folk, and they know well enough that they were not divinely appointed, but elected by the votes of their party.

Who is it whose safety requires that Captain Brown be hung? Is it indispensable to any Northern man? Is there no resource but to cast this man also to the Minotaur? If you do not wish it, say so distinctly. While these things are being done, beauty stands veiled and music is a screeching lie. Think of him,—of his rare qualities!—such a man as it takes ages to make, and ages to understand; no mock hero, nor the representative of any party. A man such as the sun may not rise upon again in this benighted land. To whose making went the costliest material, the finest adamant; sent to be the redeemer of those in captivity; and the only use to which you can put him is to hang him at the end of a rope! You who pretend to care for Christ crucified, consider what you are about to do to him who offered himself to be the saviour of four millions of men.

Any man knows when he is justified, and all the wits in the world cannot enlighten him on that point. The murderer always knows that he is justly punished; but when a government takes the life of a man without the consent of his conscience, it is an audacious government, and is taking a step towards its own dissolution. Is it not possible that an individual may be right and a government wrong? Are laws to be enforced simply because they were made? or declared by any number of men to be good, if they are not good? Is there any necessity for a man's being a tool to perform a deed of which

his better nature disapproves? Is it the intention of law-makers that good men shall be hung ever? Are judges to interpret the law according to the letter, and not the spirit? What right have you to enter into a compact with yourself that you *will* do thus or so, against the light within you? Is it for you to *make up* your mind,—to form any resolution whatever,—and not accept the convictions that are forced upon you, and which never pass your understanding? I do not believe in lawyers, in that mode of attacking or defending a man, because you descend to meet the judge on his own ground, and, in cases of the highest importance, it is of no consequence whether a man breaks a human law or not. Let lawyers decide trivial cases. Business men may arrange that among themselves. If they were the interpreters of the everlasting laws which rightfully bind man, that would be another thing. A counterfeiting law-factory, standing half in a slave land and half in a free! What kind of laws for free men can you expect from that?

I am here to plead his cause with you. I plead not for his life, but for his character,—his immortal life; and so it becomes your cause wholly, and is not his in the least. Some eighteen hundred years ago Christ was crucified; this morning, perchance, Captain Brown was hung. These are the two ends of a chain which is not without its links. He is not Old Brown any longer; he is an angel of light.

I see now that it was necessary that the bravest and humanest man in all the country should be hung. Perhaps he saw it himself.—I almost fear that I may yet hear of his deliverance, doubting if a prolonged life, if any life, can do as much good as his death.

"Misguided!" "Garrulous!" "Insane!" "Vindictive!" So ye write in your easy-chairs, and thus he wounded responds from the floor of the Armory, clear as a cloudless sky, true as the voice of nature is: "No man sent me here; it was my own prompting and that of my Maker. I acknowledge no master in human form."

And in what a sweet and noble strain he proceeds, addressing his captors, who stand over him: "I think, my friends, you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity, and it would be perfectly right for any one to interfere with you so far as to free those you willfully and wickedly hold in bondage."

And, referring to his movement: "It is, in my opinion, the greatest service a man can render to God."

"I pity the poor in bondage that have none to help them; that is why I am here; not to gratify any personal animosity, revenge, or vindictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the oppressed and the wronged, that are as good as you, and as precious in the sight of God."

You don't know your testament when you see it.

"I want you to understand that I respect the rights of the poorest and weakest of colored people, oppressed by the slave power, just as much as I do those of the most wealthy and powerful."

"I wish to say, furthermore, that you had better, all you people at the South, prepare yourselves for a settlement of that question, that must come up for settlement sooner than you are prepared for it. The sooner you are prepared the better. You may dispose of me very easily. I am nearly disposed of now; but this question is still to be settled,—this negro question, I mean; the end of that is not yet."

I foresee the time when the painter will paint that scene, no longer going to Rome for a subject; the poet will sing it; the historian record it; and, with the Landing of the Pilgrims and the Declaration of Independence, it will be the ornament of some future national gallery, when at least the present form of slavery shall be no more here. We shall then be at liberty to weep for Captain Brown. Then, and not till then, we will take our revenge.

## Beethoven

H. L. MENCKEN

BEETHOVEN was one of those lucky men whose stature, viewed in retrospect, grows steadily. How many movements have there been to put him on the shelf? At least a dozen in the hundred years since his death. There was one only a few years ago in New York, launched by idiot critics and supported by the war fever: his place, it appeared, was to be taken by such prophets of the new enlightenment as Stravinsky! The net result of that movement was simply that the best orchestra in America went to pot—and Beethoven survived unscathed. It is, indeed, almost impossible to imagine displacing him—at all events, in the concert-hall, where the challenge of Bach cannot reach him. Surely the Nineteenth Century was not deficient in master musicians. It produced Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Wagner and Brahms, to say nothing of a whole horde of Dvořáks, Tschaikowskys, Debussys, Raffs, Verdis and Puccinis. Yet it gave us nothing better than the first movement of the *Eroica*. That movement, the first challenge of the new music, remains its last word. It is the noblest piece of absolute music ever written in the sonata form, and it is the noblest piece of program music. In Beethoven, indeed, the distinction between the two became purely imaginary. Everything he wrote was, in a way, program music, including even the first

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two symphonies, and everything was absolute music, including even the Battle grotesquerie. (Is the latter, indeed, as bad as ancient report makes it? Why doesn't some *Kapellmeister* let us hear it?)

It was a bizarre jest of the gods to pit Beethoven, in his first days in Vienna, against Papa Haydn. Haydn was undeniably a genius of the first water, and, after Mozart's death, had no apparent reason to fear a rival. If he did not actually create the symphony as we know it to-day, then he at least enriched the form with its first genuine masterpieces—and not with a scant few, but literally with dozens. Tunes of the utmost loveliness gushed from him like oil from a well. More, he knew how to manage them; he was a master of musical architectonics. If his music is sniffed at to-day, then it is only by fools; there are at least six of his symphonies that are each worth all the cacophony hatched by a whole herd of Schönbergs and Eric Saties, with a couple of Korngolds thrown in to flavor the pot. But when Beethoven stepped in, then poor old Papa had to step down. It was like pitting a gazelle against an aurochs. One colossal bellow, and the combat was over. Musicians are apt to look at it as a mere contest of technicians. They point to the vastly greater skill and ingenuity of Beethoven—his firmer grip upon his materials, his greater daring and resourcefulness, his far better understanding of dynamics, rhythms and clang-tints—in brief, his tremendously superior musicianship. But that was not what made him so much greater than Haydn—for Haydn, too, had his superiorities; for example, his far readier inventiveness, his capacity for making better tunes. What lifted Beethoven above the old master, and above all other men of music save perhaps Bach and Brahms, was simply his greater dignity as a man. The feelings that Haydn put into tone were the feelings of a country pastor, a rather civilized stockbroker, a viola player gently mellowed by Kulmbacher. When he wept it was with the tears of a woman who has discovered another wrinkle; when he rejoiced it was with the joy of a



child on Christmas morning. But the feelings that Beethoven put into his music were the feelings of a god. There was something olympian in his snarls and rages, and there was a touch of hell-fire in his mirth.

It is almost a literal fact that there is not a trace of cheapness in the whole body of his music. He is never sweet and romantic; he never sheds conventional tears; he never strikes orthodox attitudes. In his lightest moods there is the immense and inescapable dignity of the ancient Hebrew prophets. He concerns himself, not with the puerile agonies of love, but with the eternal tragedy of man. He is a great tragic poet, and like all great tragic poets, he is obsessed by a sense of the inscrutable meaninglessness of life. From the *Eroica* onward he seldom departs from that theme. It roars through the first movement of the *C minor*, and it comes to a stupendous final statement in the Ninth. All this, in his day, was new in music, and so it caused murmurs of surprise and even indignation. The step from Mozart's *Jupiter* to the first movement of the *Eroica* was uncomfortable; the Viennese began to wriggle in their stalls. But there was one among them who didn't wriggle, and that was Franz Schubert. Turn to the first movement of his *Unfinished* or to the slow movement of his *Tragic*, and you will see how quickly the example of Beethoven was followed—and with what genius! But there was a long hiatus after that, with Mendelssohn, Weber, Chopin and company performing upon their pretty pipes. Eventually the day of November 6, 1876, dawned in Karlsruhe, and with it came the first performance of Brahms' *C minor*. Once more the gods walked in the concert-hall. They will walk again when another Brahms is born, but not before. For nothing can come out of an artist that is not in the man. What ails the music of all the Tschaikowskys, Stravinskys—and Strausses? What ails it is that it is the music of shallow men. It is often, in its way, lovely. It bristles with charming musical ideas. It is infinitely ingenious and work-

manlike. But it is as hollow, at bottom, as a bull by Bishop Manning. It is the music of second-rate men.

Beethoven disdained all their artifices: he didn't need them. It would be hard to think of a composer, even of the fourth rate, who worked with thematic material of less intrinsic merit. He borrowed tunes wherever he found them; he made them up out of snatches of country jigs; when he lacked one altogether he contented himself with a simple phrase, a few banal notes. All such things he viewed simply as raw materials; his interest was concentrated upon their use. To that use of them he brought the appalling powers of his unrivaled genius. His ingenuity began where that of other men left off. His most complicated structures retained the overwhelming clarity of the Parthenon. And into them he got a kind of feeling that even the Greeks could seldom match; he was preëminently a modern man, with all trace of the barbarian vanished. In his gorgeous music there went all of the high skepticism that was of the essence of the Eighteenth Century, but into it there also went the new enthusiasm, the new determination to challenge and beat the gods, that dawned with the Nineteenth.

The older I grow, the more I am convinced that the most portentous phenomenon in the whole history of music was the first public performance of the *Eroica* on April 7, 1805. The manufacturers of program notes have swathed that gigantic work in so many layers of childish legend and speculation that its intrinsic merits have been almost forgotten. Was it dedicated to Napoleon I? If so, was the dedication sincere or ironical? Who cares—that is, who with ears? It might have been dedicated, just as well, to Louis XIV, Paracelsus or Pontius Pilate. What makes it worth discussing, to-day and forever, is the fact that on its very first page Beethoven threw his hat into the ring and laid his claim to immortality. Bang!—and he is off! No compromise! No easy bridge from the past! The *Second Symphony* is already miles behind. A new order of music

has been born. The very manner of it is full of challenge. There is no sneaking into the foul business by way of a mellifluous and disarming introduction; no preparatory hemming and hawing to cajole the audience and enable the conductor to find his place in the score. Nay! Out of silence comes the angry crash of the tonic triad, and then at once, with no pause, the first statement of the first subject—grim, domineering, harsh, raucous, and yet curiously lovely—with its astounding collision with that electrical C sharp. The carnage has begun early; we are only in the seventh measure! In the thirteenth and fourteenth comes the incomparable roll down the simple scale of E flat—and what follows is all that has ever been said, perhaps all that ever *will* be said, about music-making in the grand manner. What was afterward done, even by Beethoven, was done in the light of that perfect example. Every line of modern music that is honestly music bears some sort of relation to that epoch-making first movement.

The rest is Beethovenish, but not quintessence. There is a legend that the funeral march was put in simply because it was a time of wholesale butchery, and funeral marches were in fashion. No doubt the first-night audience in Vienna, shocked and addled by the piled-up defiances of the first movement, found the lugubrious strains grateful. But the *scherzo*? Another felonious assault upon poor Papa Haydn! Two giants boxing clumsily, to a crazy piping by an orchestra of dwarfs. No wonder some honest Viennese in the gallery yelled: "I'd give another kreutzer if the thing would stop!" Well, it stopped finally, and then came something reassuring—a theme with variations. Everyone in Vienna knew and esteemed Beethoven's themes with variations. He was, in fact, the rising master of themes with variations in the town. But a joker remained in the pack. The variations grew more and more complex and surprising. Strange novelties got into them. The polite exercises became tempestuous, moody, cacophonous, tragic. At the

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end a harsh, hammering, exigent row of chords—the C minor Symphony casting its sinister shadow before!

It must have been a great night in Vienna. But perhaps not for the actual Viennese. They went to hear “a new grand symphony in D sharp” (*sic!*). What they found in the Theater-ander-Wien was a revolution!

## Aristocracy

D. H. LAWRENCE

EVERYTHING in the world is relative to everything else. And every living thing is related to every other living thing.

But creation moves in cycles, and in degrees. There is higher and lower, in the cycles of creation, and greater and less, in the degree of life.

Each thing that attains to purity in its own cycle of existence, is pure and is itself, and, in its purity, is beyond compare.

But in relation to other things, it is either higher or lower, of greater or less degree.

We have to admit that a daisy is more highly developed than a fern, even if it be a tree-fern. The daisy belongs to a higher order of life. That is, the daisy is more alive. The fern more torpid.

And a bee is more alive than a daisy: of a higher order of life. The daisy, pure as it is in its own being, yet, when compared with the bee, is limited in its being.

And birds are higher than bees: more alive. And mammals are higher than birds. And man is the highest, most developed, most conscious, most *alive* of the mammals: master of them all.

But even within the species, there is a difference. The night-

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From *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, Philadelphia, Centaur Press, 1925.

ingale is higher, purer, even more alive, more subtly, delicately alive, than the sparrow. And the parrot is more highly developed, or more alive, than the pigeon.

Among men, the difference in *being* is infinite. And it is a difference in degree as well as in kind. One man *is*, in himself, more, more alive, more of a man, than another. One man has greater being than another, a purer manhood, a more vivid livingness. The difference is infinite.

And, seeing that the inferiors are vastly more numerous than the superiors, when Jesus came, the inferiors, who are by no means the meek that they *should* be, set out to inherit the earth.

Jesus, in a world of arrogant Pharisees and egoistic Romans, thought that purity and poverty were one. It was a fatal mistake. Purity is often enough poor. But poverty is only too rarely pure. Poverty too often is only the result of *natural* poorness, poorness in courage, poorness in living vitality, poorness in manhood: poor life, poor character. Now the poor in life are the most impure, the most easily degenerate.

But the few men rich in life and pure in heart read purity into poverty, and Christianity started. \*Charity suffereth long, and is kind. Charity envieth not. Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

They are the words of a noble manhood.

There happened what was bound to happen: the men with pure hearts left the scramble for money and power to the impure.

Still the great appeal: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," acted powerfully on the hearts of the poor, who were still full of life. The rich were more active, but less alive. The poor still wanted, most of all, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Until the pure men began to mistrust the figurative Kingdom of Heaven: "Not much Kingdom of Heaven for a hungry man," they said.

This was a mistake, and a fall into impurity. For even if I die of hunger, the Kingdom of Heaven is within me, and I am within it, if I truly choose.

But once the pure man said this: "*Not much Kingdom of Heaven for a hungry man*," the Soul began to die out of men.

By the old creed, every soul was equal in the sight of God. By the new creed, every body should be equal in the sight of men. And being equal meant, having equal possessions. And possessions were reckoned in terms of money.

So that money became the one absolute. And man figures as a money-possessor and a money-getter. The absolute, the God, the Kingdom of Heaven itself, became money; hard, hard cash. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you" now means "The money is in your pocket." "Then shall thy peace be as a river" now means "Then shall thy investments bring thee a safe and ample income."

"*L'homme est né libre*" means "He is born without a sou." "*Et on le trouve partout enchainé*" means "He wears breeches, and must fill his pockets."

So now there is a new (a new-old) aristocracy of money. Have you a million *gold*? (for heaven's sake, the gold standard!) Then you are a *king*. Have you five hundred thousand? Then you are a lord.

"In *my* country, we're *all* kings and queens," as the American lady said, being a bit sick of certain British snobbery. She was quite right: they are all potential kings and queens. But until they come into their kingdom—five hundred thousand dollars minimum—they might just as well be commoners.

Yet even still, there is *natural* aristocracy.

Aristocracy of birth is bunk, when a Kaiser Wilhelm and an Emperor Franz-Josef and a Czar Nicolas is all that noble birth will do for you.

Yet the whole of life is established on a natural aristocracy. And aristocracy of birth is a *little* more natural than aristocracy of money. (Oh, for God's sake, the gold standard!)

But a millionaire can do without birth, whereas birth cannot do without dollars. So, by the all-prevailing law of pragmatism, the dollar has it.

What then does *natural* aristocracy consist in?

It's not just brains! The mind is an instrument, and the *savant*, the professor, the scientist, has been looked upon since the Ptolemies, as a sort of upper servant. And justly. The millionaire has brains too: so does a modern President or Prime Minister. They all belong to the class of upper servants. They serve, forsooth, the public.

"Ca, Ca, Caliban!

Get a new master, be a new man."

What does a natural aristocracy consist in? Count Keyserling says: "Not in what a man can *do*, but what he *is*." Unfortunately what a man *is*, is measured by what he can do, even in nature. A nightingale, being a nightingale, can sing: which a sparrow can't. If you *are* something you'll *do* something, *ipso facto*.

The question is what *kind* of thing can a man do? Can he put more life into us, and release in us the fountains of our vitality? Or can he only help to feed us, and give us money or amusement.

The providing of food, money, and amusement belongs, truly, to the servant class.

The providing of *life* belongs to the aristocrat. If a man, whether by thought or action, makes *life*, he is an aristocrat. So Caesar and Cicero are both strictly aristocrats. Lacking these two, the first century B.C. would have been far less vital, less vividly alive. And Antony, who seemed so much more vital, robust and robustious, was, when we look at it, comparatively unimportant. Caesar and Cicero lit the flame.

How? It is easier asked than answered.

But one thing they did, whatever else: they put men into a new relation with the universe. Caesar opened Gaul, Ger-



many and Britain, and let the gleam of ice and snow, the shag-giness of the north, the mystery of the menhir and the mistletoe in upon the rather stuffy soul of Rome, and of the Orient. And Cicero was discovering the moral nature of man, as citizen chiefly, and so putting man in new relation to man.

But Caesar was greater than Cicero. He put man in new relation to ice and sun.

Only Caesar was, perhaps, also too much an egoist; he never knew the mysteries he moved amongst. But Caesar was great *beyond* morality.

Man's life consists in a connection with all things in the universe. Whoever can establish, or initiate a new connection between mankind and the circumambient universe is, in his own degree, a saviour. Because mankind is always exhausting its human possibilities, always degenerating into repetition, torpor, *ennui*, lifelessness. When *ennui* sets in, it is a sign that human vitality is waning, and the human connection with the universe is gone stale.

Then he who comes to make a new revelation, a new connection, whether he be soldier, statesman, poet, philosopher, artist, he is a saviour.

When George Stephenson invented the locomotive engine, he provided a *means of communication*, but he didn't alter in the slightest man's *vital* relation to the universe. But Galileo and Newton, *discoverers*, not inventors, they made a big difference. And the energy released in mankind because of them was enormous. The same is true of Peter the Great, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon. The same is true of Voltaire, Shelley, Wordsworth, Byron, Rousseau. They established a *new* connection between mankind and the universe, and the result was a vast release of energy. The *sun* was reborn to man, so was the moon.

To man, the very sun goes stale, becomes a habit. Comes a saviour, a seer, and the very sun dances new in heaven.

That is because the *sun* is always *sun beyond sun beyond sun*. The sun is every sun that ever has been, Helios or Mithras, the sun of China or of Brahma, or of Peru or of Mexico: great gorgeous suns, besides which our puny "envelope of incandescent gas" is a smoky candle-wick.

It is our fault. When man becomes stale and paltry, his sun is the mere stuff that our sun is. When man is great and splendid, the sun of China and Mithras blazes over him and gives him, not radiant energy in the form of heat and light, but life, life, life!

The world is to us what we take from it. The sun is to us what we take from it. And if we are puny, it is because we take punily from the superb sun.

Man is great according as his relation to the living universe is vast and vital.

Men are related to men: including women: and this, of course, is very important. But one would think it were everything. One would think, to read modern books, that the life of any tuppenny bank-clerk was more important than sun, moon, and stars; and to read the pert drivel of the critics, one would be led to imagine that every three-farthing whipper-snapper who lifts up his voice in approval or censure were the thrice-greatest Hermes speaking in judgment out of the mysteries.

This is the democratic age of cheap clap-trap, and it sits in jackdaw judgment on all greatness.

And this is the result of making, in our own conceit, man the measure of the universe. Don't you be taken in. The universe, so vast and profound, measures man up very accurately, for the yelping mongrel with his tail between his legs, that he is. And the great sun, and the moon, with a smile will soon start dropping the mongrel down the vast refuse-pit of oblivion. Oh, the universe has a terrible hole in the middle of it, an oubliette for all of you, whipper-snapping mongrels.

Man, of course, being measure of the universe, is measured

only against man. Has, of course, vital relationship only with his own cheap little species. Hence the cheap little twaddler he has become.

In the great ages, man had vital relation with man, with woman: and beyond that, with the cow, the lion, the bull, the cat, the eagle, the beetle, the serpent. And beyond these, with narcissus and anemone, mistletoe and oak-tree, myrtle, olive, and lotus. And beyond these with humus and slanting water, cloud-towers and rainbow and the sweeping sun-limbs. And beyond that, with sun, and moon, the living night and the living day.

Do you imagine the great realities, even the ram of Amon, are only *symbols* of something human? Do you imagine the great symbols, the dragon, the snake, the bull, only refer to bits, qualities or attributes of little man? It is puerile. The puerility, the puppyish conceit of modern white humanity is almost funny.

Amon, the great ram, do you think he doesn't stand alone in the universe, without your permission, oh cheap little man? Because he's there, do you think *you* bred him, out of your own almightiness, you cheap-jack?

Amon, the great ram! Mithras, the great bull! The mistletoe on the tree. Do you think, you stuffy little human fool sitting in a chair and wearing lambs-wool underwear and eating your mutton and beef under the Christmas decoration, do you think then that Amon, Mithras, Mistletoe, and the whole Tree of Life were just invented to contribute to your complacency?

You fool! You dyspeptic fool, with your indigestion tablets! You can eat your mutton and your beef, and by sixpenn'orth of the golden bough, till your belly turns sour, you fool. Do you think, because you keep a fat castrated cat, the moon is upon your knees? Do you think, in your woolen underwear, you are clothed in the might of Amon?

You idiot! You cheap-jack idiot!

Was not the ram created before you were, you twaddler? Did

he not come in night out of chaos? And is he not still clothed in might? To you, he is mutton. Your wonderful perspicacity relates you to him just that far. But any farther, he is—well, wool.

Don't you see, idiot and fool, that you have *lost* the ram out of your life entirely, and it is one great connection gone, one great life-flow broken? Don't you see you are so much the emptier, mutton-stuffed and wool-wadded, but lifeless, lifeless.

And the oak-tree, the slow great oak-tree, isn't he alive? Doesn't he live where you don't live, with a vast silence you shall never, never penetrate, though you chop him into kindling shred from shred? He is alive with life such as you have not got and will never have. And in so far as he is a vast, powerful, silent life, you should worship him.

You should seek a living relation with him. Didn't the old Englishman have a living, vital relation to the oak-tree, a *mystic* relation? Yes, mystic! Didn't the red-faced old Admirals who *made* England, have a living relation in *sacredness*, with the oak-tree which was their ship, their ark? The last living vibration and power in pure connection, between man and tree, coming down from the Druids.

And all you can do now is to twiddle-twaddle about golden boughs, because you are empty, empty, empty, hollow, deficient, and cardboardy.

Do you think the tree is not, now and for ever, sacred and fearsome? The trees have turned against you, fools, and you are running in imbecility to your own destruction.

Do you think the bull is at your disposal, you zenith of creation? Why, I tell you, the blood of the bull is indeed your poison. Your veins are bursting, with beef. You may well turn vegetarian. But even milk is bull's blood: or Hathor's.

My cow Susan is at my disposal indeed. But when I see her suddenly emerging, jet-black, sliding through the gate of her little corral into the open sun, does not my heart stand still, and cry out, in some long-forgotten tongue, salutation to the

fearsome one? Is not even now my life widened and deepened in connection with her life, throbbing with the other pulse, of the bull's blood?

Is not this my life, this throbbing of the bull's blood in my blood?

And as the white cock calls in the doorway, who calls? Merely a barnyard rooster, worth a dollar-and-a-half. But listen! Under the old dawns of creation the Holy Ghost, the Mediator, shouts aloud in the twilight. And every time I hear him, a fountain of vitality gushes up in my body. It is life.

So it is! Degree after degree after degree widens out the relation between man and his universe, till it reaches the sun, and the night.

The impulse of existence, of course, is to *devour* all the lower orders of life. So man now looks upon the white cock, the cow, the ram, as good to eat.

But *living* and having *being* means the relatedness between me and all things. In so far as I am I, a being who is proud and in place, I have a connection with my circumambient universe, and I know my place. When the white cock crows, I do not hear myself, or some anthropomorphic conceit, crowing. I hear the not-me, the voice of the Holy Ghost. And when I see the hard, solid, longish green cones thrusting up at blue heaven from the high bluish tips of the balsam pine, I say: "Behold! Look at the strong, fertile silence of the thrusting tree! God is in the bush like a clenched dark fist, or a thrust phallus."

So it is with every natural thing. It has a vital relation with all other natural things. Only the machine is absolved from vital relation. It is based on the mystery of neuters. The neutralising of one great natural force against another, makes mechanical power. Makes the engine's wheels go round.

Does the earth go round like a wheel, in the same way? No! In the living, balanced, hovering flight of the earth, there is a strange leaning, an unstatic equilibrium, a balance that is non-balance. This is owing to the relativity of earth, moon, and

sun, a vital, even sentient relatedness, never perpendicular: nothing neutral or neuter.

Every natural thing has its own living relation to every other natural thing. So the tiger, striped in gold and black, lies and stretches his limbs in perfection between all that the day is, and all that is night. He has a by-the-way relatedness with trees, soil, water, man, cobras, deer, ants, and of course, the she-tiger. Of all these he is reckless as Caesar was. When he stretches himself superbly, he stretches himself between the living day and the living night, the vast inexhaustible duality of creation. And he is the fanged and brindled Holy Ghost, with ice-shining whiskers.

The same with man. His life consists in a relation with all things: stone, earth, trees, flowers, water, insects, fishes, birds, creatures, sun, rainbow, children, women, other men. But his greatest and final relation is with the sun, the sun of suns: and with the night, which is moon and dark and stars. In the last great connections, he lifts his body speechless to the sun, and, the same body, but so different, to the moon and the stars, and the spaces between the stars.

Sun! Yes, the actual sun! That which blazes in the day! Which scientists call a sphere of blazing gas—what a lot of human gas there is, which has never been set ablaze!—and which the Greeks call Helios!

The sun, I tell you, is alive, and more alive than I am, or a tree is. It may have blazing gas, as I have hair, and a tree has leaves. But I tell you, it is the Holy Ghost in full raiment, shaking and walking, and alive as a tiger is, only more so, in the sky.

And when I can turn my body to the sun, and say: "Sun! Sun!" and we meet—then I am come finally into my own. For the universe of day, finally, is the sun. And when the day of the sun is my day too, I am a lord of all the world.

And at night, when the silence of the moon, and the stars, and the spaces between the stars, is the silence of me too, then

I am come into my own by night. For night is a vast untellable life, and the Holy Ghost starry, beheld as we only behold night on earth.

In his ultimate and surpassing relation, man is given only to that which he can never describe or account for; the sun, as it is alive, and the living night.

A man's supreme moment of active life is when he looks up and is with the sun, and is with the sun as a woman is with child. The actual yellow sun of morning.

This makes man a lord, an aristocrat of life.

And the supreme moment of quiescent life is when a man looks up into the night, and is gone into the night, so the night is like a woman with child, bearing him. And this, a man has to himself.

The true aristocrat is the man who has passed all the relationships and has met the sun, and the sun is with him as a diadem.

Caesar was like this. He passed through the great relationships, with ruthlessness, and came to the sun. And he became a sun-man. But he was too unconscious. He was not aware that the sun for ever was beyond him, and that only in his *relation* to the sun was he deified. He wanted to be God.

Alexander was wiser. He placed himself a god among men. But when blood flowed from a wound in him, he said, "Look! It is the blood of a man like other men."

The sun makes man a lord: an aristocrat: almost a deity. But in his consummation with night and the moon, man knows for ever his own passing away.

But no man is man in all his splendour till he passes further than every relationship: further than mankind and woman-kind, in the last leap to the sun, to the night. The man who can touch both sun and night, as the woman touched the garment of Jesus, becomes a lord and a saviour, in his own kind. With the sun he has his final and ultimate relationship, beyond

man or woman, or anything human or created. And in this final relation is he most intensely alive, surpassing.

Every creature at its zenith surpasses creation and is alone in the face of the sun, and the night: the sun that lives, and the night that lives and survives. Then we pass beyond every other relationship, and every other relationship, even the intensest passion of love, sinks into subordination and obscurity. Indeed, every relationship, even that of purest love, is only an approach nearer and nearer, to a man's last consummation with the sun, with the moon or night. And in the consummation with the sun, even love is left behind.

He who has the sun in his face, in his body, he is the pure aristocrat. He who has the sun in his breast, and the moon in his belly, he is the first: the aristocrat of aristocrats, supreme in the aristocracy of life.

Because he is *most alive*.

Being alive constitutes an aristocracy which there is no getting beyond. He who is most alive, intrinsically, is King, whether men admit it or not. In the face of the sun.

Life rises in circles, in degrees. The most living is the highest. And the lower shall serve the higher, if there is to be any life among men.

More life! More *vivid* life! Not more safe cabbages, or meaningless masses of people.

Perhaps Dostoevsky was more vividly alive than Plato: culminating a more vivid life circle, and giving the clue towards a higher circle still. But the clue *hidden*, as it always is hidden, in every revelation, underneath what is stated.

All creation contributes, and must contribute to this: towards the achieving of a vaster, vivider cycle of life. That is the goal of living. He who gets nearer the sun is leader, the aristocrat of aristocrats. Or he who, like Dostoevsky, gets nearest the moon of our not-being.

There is, of course, the power of mere conservatism and in-



ertia. Deserts made the cactus thorny. But the cactus still is a rose of roses.

Whereas a sort of cowardice made the porcupine spiny. There is a difference between the cowardice of inertia, which now governs the democratic masses, particularly the capitalist masses: and the conservative fighting spirit which saved the cactus in the middle of the desert.

The democratic mass, capitalist and proletariat alike, are a vast, sluggish, ghastily greedy porcupine, lumbering with inertia. Even Bolshevism is the same porcupine: nothing but greed and inertia.

The cactus had a rose to fight for. But what has democracy to fight for, against the living elements, except money, money, money!

The world is stuck solid inside an achieved form, and bristling with a myriad spines, to protect its hulking body as it feeds: gnawing the bark of the young tree of Life, and killing it from the top downwards. Leaving its spines to fester and fester in the nose of the gay dog.

The actual porcupine, in spite of legend, cannot shoot its quills. But mankind, the porcupine out-pigging the porcupine, can stick quills into the face of the sun.

Bah! Enough of the squalor of democratic humanity. It is time to begin to recognize the aristocracy of the sun. The children of the sun shall be lords of the earth.

There will form a new aristocracy, irrespective of nationality, of men who have reached the sun. Men of the sun, whether Chinese or Hottentot, or Nordic, or Hindu, or Esquimo, if they touch the sun in the heavens, are lords of the earth. And together they will for the aristocracy of the world. And in the coming era they will rule the world; a confraternity of the living sun, making the embers of financial internationalism and industrial internationalism pale upon the hearth of the earth.

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# A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country

JOHNATHAN SWIFT

IT is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin-doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants, who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country, to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties, that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound and useful members of the common-wealth, would deserve so well of the publick as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide

only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age, who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts, for many years, upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of other projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropt from its dam may be supported by her milk for a solar year with little other nourishment, at most not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner, as, instead of being a charge upon their parents, or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the feeding and partly to the clothing of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us—sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame—which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couples, who are able to maintain their own children, although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present distresses of the kingdom; but this being granted, there will remain an hundred and seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand, for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain an hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually

born: The question therefore is, How this number shall be reared, and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed; for we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses, (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land: They can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts, although, I confess, they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time they can however be properly looked upon only as probationers; as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old, is no saleable commodity, and even when they come to this age, they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half a crown at most, on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricasee, or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to publick consideration, that of the hundred and twenty thousand children, already computed. twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine, and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not

much regarded by our savages; therefore, one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may at a year old be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune, through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium, that a child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, encreaseth to 28 pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after; for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolifick dyet, there are more children born in Roman Catholick countries about nine months after Lent, than at any other season; therefore reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants, is at least three to one in this kingdom, and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he hath only some particular friend, or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants; the mother will have eight

shillings neat profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose, in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased, in discoursing on this matter, to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said, that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age, nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every country being now ready to starve, for want of work and service: And these to be disposed of by their parents if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend, and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable, and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think with humble submission, be a loss to the publick, because they soon would become breeders themselves: And besides it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty, which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well so ever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed, that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London, above twenty years ago, and in conversation told my friend, that in his country when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality, as a prime dainty, and that, in his time, the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the Emperor, was sold to his Imperial Majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbett, at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who, without one single groat to their fortunes, cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at a play-house and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken, to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known, that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold, and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it, and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For *first*, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of papists, with whom we are yearly over-run, being the principal breeders of the nation, as well as our most dangerous enemies, and who stay at home on purpose with a design to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country, than stay at home, and pay tithes against their conscience to an episcopal curate.

*Secondly*, the poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own which by law may be made liable to distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

*Thirdly*, whereas the maintenance of an hundred thousand children, from two years old, and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, besides the profit of a new dish, introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste, and the money will circulate among our selves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

*Fourthly*, the constant breeders, besides the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum, by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

*Fifthly*, this food would likewise bring great custom to taverns, where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection; and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating; and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

*Sixthly*, this would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards, or



enforced by laws and penalties. It would encrease the care and tenderness of mothers towards their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the publick, to their annual profit instead of expence; we should soon see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy, as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, or sows when they are ready to farrow, nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barreled beef: the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our tables, which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well grown, fat yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a Lord Mayor's feast, or any other publick entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city, would be constant customers for infant's flesh, besides others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses, and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection, that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged, that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and 'twas indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland, and for no other that ever was, is, or, I think, ever can

be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither clothes, nor household furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence and temperance: of learning to love our country, wherein we differ even from Laplanders, and the inhabitants of Topinamboo: of quitting our animosities, and factions, nor act any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and consciences for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants. Lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shop-keepers, who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he hath at least some glimpse of hope, that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But as to my self, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal, which as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging England. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion, as to reject any offer, proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors, will be pleased maturely to consider two points. *First*, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for a hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And *secondly*, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt two millions of pounds sterling—adding those who are beggars by profession, to the bulk of farmers, cottagers and labourers, with their wives and children, who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians, who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old, in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through, by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like, or greater miseries, upon their breed for ever.

I profess in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the publick good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old and my wife past child-bearing.

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## *Section Three*

L I T E R A R Y   A R T  
A N D   T H E   C R E A T I V E   I M A G I N A T I O N



## Introductory Comment

LITERATURE," it was pointed out in the comment on "Browning," "is the most complex of the arts because its medium is the most intricate and its potential subject matter is the largest and most diversified. No single technique for a whole and adequate criticism of a literary work has yet been evolved."

Neither has a whole and adequate definition of what constitutes a literary work. For every definition that has been attempted, there can be found many notable exceptions which experienced readers insist are literary works. Since this is so, we cannot hope to define precisely the yet more narrow term *literary essay*. However, it is probable that most readers would agree that the essays in this section are truly literary essays. We may, therefore, discuss some of their qualities without insisting that our discussion constitutes or even implies a final, closed definition.

The potential subject matter of the literary essay is simply life—all parts of the world as we perceive *and respond* to them. The other arts, music, painting, sculpture, the dance, and so forth, are somewhat limited by their media in the subjects they can present. Literature is not. Its medium is almost bewilderingly intricate and fabulously expressive. It employs a huge vocabulary in which most of the words have a denotative core of meaning and an aura of connotative meanings which make possible subtle nuances of idea and tone. It has imagery, with all its powers of suggestion and, when it consists of figures of speech, its capacity to express significant and often striking and dramatic analogies. It has the tonality of words and phrases with all their variety of vowels and consonant

sounds, their differences of pitch and intonation, and their rhythms (when arranged) all of which are heard by many readers in the "mind's ear" even when a work is read silently. And it has all the infinite arrangements among the details which make possible suspense, paradox, contrast, uniformity, irony, and many other expressive relationships.

This immeasurably rich medium not only can communicate representations and interpretations of all aspects of life; it can also offer a high degree of aesthetic interest if the purpose of a work includes or at least permits this. Perhaps it is the large amount of achieved aesthetic interest which, more than any other single factor, distinguishes literary from nonliterary writing in general and the literary essays of this section from most of the essays in the other two sections.

The qualities upon which aesthetic interest and the associated pleasure depend are many and some of them are extremely subtle and elusive. Hence we can mention only a few of them here. Some belong to the individual elements within a work and are recognized largely by intuition. A single tone played on a fine 'cello has such intrinsic qualities and may possess a great aesthetic interest. So do many images, as can be seen as soon as one begins to read "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn," by D. H. Lawrence, in which some of the images, such as the comparison of the Indian dancers with a pine forest, are so beautiful as to provide great delight quite apart from their role in the essay as a whole. In selecting details for their pieces, the literary essayists often, *but not always*, tend to pick those having individual interest.

Other, more important qualities are functions of the mutual interaction of all the elements in a work. There is always some danger when we analyze literary essays for a better understanding of their purposes, ideas, and tones that we will overlook some of these qualities and hence respond only to the aesthetic appeal of separate details. Any analysis, therefore, should always be followed by a synthesis to enable us to appreciate the qualities that result from all the details *acting together*. The most important of these qualities are listed below. They are not found just in literary essays; but among these works they appear in greater quantity, and resulting aesthetic interest is greater. The qualities are these:

1. An *appropriateness* in the selection and arrangement of the details and technical features to the larger ideas, the tone, and the particular purpose of the essay. For example, as we read "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn," we see that in addition to the great intrinsic interest of some of the details there is a constant appropriateness among all of them—the details of the Indian village, the costumes, and the rituals of the dance—and among the images, the rhythms, the repetitions, and the order of the ideas, which reaches a climax of meaning and intensity with the description of the climax of the ceremony. The details and the arrangement serve to define and emphasize Lawrence's ideas about the ceremony (so different from those of an anthropologist, a social worker, a choreographer, or a writer who pities the Indians for their backwardness), to express a tone of wonder and dazed, almost mystical rapture such as one might feel while watching the actual dance, and to realize the purpose, which is to make us perceive all the sensuous qualities and symbolic importance of the ritual. Inappropriate details, such as the possible filth and odors of the village or laziness and cupidity of many of the people, have been carefully omitted.
2. An expressive and not merely mechanical *consistency* among the essay's parts. An expressive consistency seems to result from mastery of the details, from thorough exploration of the subject together with imaginative insights which discover consistencies where most of us would fail to notice them, and from a triumphant struggle that has imposed meaningful order on vital, rebellious, significant details. Expressive consistency compels our admiration for the writer's skill. Instead of seeming boringly repetitious it seems cumulative, building up an intensity in the essay which pleases us. In "De Soto and the New World," almost every fact and every image suggests an unwavering, pervasive horror and doom which mount up as suffering and death close in on the explorer. In "Is There an Osteosynchondroitician in the House?", on the other hand, the details and technical features come dangerously close to seeming contrived for the sake of mechanical consistency as if Perelman, having got hold of a good thing, cannot think of another. The hilarious madness of the ending just manages to make the whole seem cumulative rather than repetitious.
3. A pleasing *tension* among the essay's parts. As has already



been suggested, we like to feel that beneath the meaningful organization of an essay there is energy and independent liveliness, which, in a sense, strain against the appropriateness and consistency made apparent by the organization and, indeed, try to escape from the organization altogether. In music, for example, we are pleased to find an over-all harmony in a work, but at the same time we enjoy the tension created by dissonances which seem to clash with and to threaten the rest of the work until we see that they too have a place in the organization. In painting we enjoy the effects created by placing two strong, antagonistic colors side by side in a work which absorbs their antagonism because it is an intentional element in the meaning of the whole. In an essay, we like to feel that the dominating effect of an unusual and intrinsically interesting metaphor is consistent with the effects of the other details and technical features nearby and that it is appropriate to the purpose, ideas and tone—that the metaphor is “submitting” to the design of the whole essay. Yet we also like to feel that there is more to it than simply the predominating effect which fits so patly—that it has connotations which enrich the representation and interpretation of life presented in the essay but do not obviously and immediately align themselves with the particular idea being developed in the passage. Or, to take a larger element, we like to be surprised by a sudden turn in a narrative which seems to disrupt the design of the whole but which turns out instead to give it an unexpected but quite plausible and meaningful conclusion.

A good example of this pleasing tension occurs in “A Visit to Grandpa’s.” As the boy and the grandfather walk through the fields they are hailed by a poacher, who then turns with his dog into a posted wood. On their return they see him again: “. . . the lean man stalked out of the forbidden wood with a rabbit held as gently over his arm as a girl’s arm in a warm sleeve.” The little episode seems at first to have no relation with the whole—no meaning. Why, we wonder, has this figure of mystery and lawlessness suddenly appeared in the midst of a sunny morning? Later we realize that it is a symbol of a rebelliousness in man and nature, an adventurousness that cannot be confined by notices forbidding trespassing or by the common sense of the villagers, and that the grandfather is in league with it to a degree. (The grand-

father and the poacher are friends, and the grandfather is neither shocked by the episode nor likely to turn his friend in.) The incident fits. Yet, even after we have seen that it does, a little tension may remain for our imaginations may be teased by the memory of the poacher. Other, less consistent, meanings seem to lurk in him, particularly because of the mention of the girl's arm in the warm sleeve, which subtly suggests a love in the wood which signs and the villagers would prohibit.

4. A dynamic *integration* of all the parts of the essay, purpose, ideas, tone, details, and technical features into a strongly felt unity with a clear, meaningful, and interesting design. Consistency and tension are both essential to this integration, but they do not inevitably produce it. For it is *dynamic*; that is, the parts do not only agree with each other but also work upon each other, modifying meanings, placing emphases, bringing out otherwise unnoticed aspects and significances which fit the parts into the whole, despite the tensions which they produce, and thus making possible the unity and design. To say that an essay has dynamic integration is to say that every element in it is functional, that nothing stands apart unaffected by the other elements and not affecting them. Such is the case in "The Death of Stonewall Jackson." Here the integration and the resulting unity and design are suddenly and beautifully revealed in the final sentence. We realize that all of the elements have been carefully chosen and placed to prepare for that sentence and that they invest it with great richness of meaning and simultaneously take additional meanings and importance from it to themselves. The result of this interaction is a profundity and intensity possible only in the highest art.

One of the consequences of the complexity and expressiveness in literary essays is that their representations of aspects of life are often more concrete and vivid than those in non-literary essays. Another is that the essayist, in accepting and fulfilling the conditions of literary art, discovers and communicates interpretations and evaluations of his subject which escape the attention of the casual observer or the writer who examines his material within the framework of a special study such as a physical or social science. For to achieve aes-

thetic interest of unusual intensity, the essayist must look at his subject from many different angles until he settles upon the best organization of his materials. The vividness and concreteness of his representation give unusual force to his interpretations. This can be seen at once when we compare an essay like "The Hero in Democracy" in the second section of this book with "Sunshine Charley" in the last section. The former, convincing and powerful as it is, is a statement *about* life—about corruptions of power and the dangers of the crowd's following a "strong" man. The latter is a dynamic representation of life itself. Few abstract statements about the material greed, the lust for power, the spiritual impotence, and the capacity for self-delusion of the men who led the nation on its great gambling spree before the crash of 1929 could seem as forceful, convincing, and significant. The description is full of little meanings and persuasive, lifelike touches which could not be found in all the studies of dangerous "heroes" and of the crash itself written by philosophers, economists, psychologists—meanings discovered by the artist as he struggled with the selection and organization of his details, and with the requirements of appropriateness, consistency, tension, and integration in his essay as a whole.

## 1. BIOGRAPHY THAT IS LITERATURE

*Dr. Arnold*

LYTTON STRACHEY

IN 1827, the headmastership of Rugby school fell vacant, and it became necessary for the twelve trustees, noblemen and gentlemen of Warwickshire, to appoint a successor to the post. Reform was in the air—political, social, religious; there was even a feeling abroad that our great public schools were not quite all that they should be, and that some change or other—no one precisely knew what—but *some* change in the system of their management, was highly desirable. Thus it was natural that when the twelve noblemen and gentlemen, who had determined to be guided entirely by the merits of the candidates, found among the testimonials pouring in upon them a letter from Dr. Hawkins, the Provost of Oriel, predicting that if they elected Mr. Thomas Arnold he would “change the face of education all through the public schools of England,” they hesitated no longer: obviously, Mr. Thomas Arnold was their man. He was elected therefore; received, as was fitting, priest’s orders; became, as was no less fitting, a Doctor of Divinity; and in August, 1828, took up the duties of his office.

All that was known of the previous life of Dr. Arnold seemed to justify the prediction of the Provost of Oriel, and the choice of the Trustees. The son of a respectable Collector of Customs,

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he had been educated at Winchester and at Oxford, where his industry and piety had given him a conspicuous place among his fellow-students. It is true that, as a schoolboy, a certain pompousness in the style of his letters home suggested to the more clear-sighted among his relatives the possibility that young Thomas might grow up into a prig; but, after all, what else could be expected from a child who, at the age of three, had been presented by his father, as a reward for proficiency in his studies, with the twenty-four volumes of Smollett's *History of England*? His career at Oxford had been a distinguished one, winding up with an Oriel fellowship. It was at about this time that the smooth and satisfactory progress of his life was for a moment interrupted: he began to be troubled by religious doubts. These doubts, as we learn from one of his contemporaries, who afterwards became Mr. Justice Coleridge,

were not low nor rationalistic in their tendency, according to the bad sense of that term; there was no indisposition in him to believe merely because the article transcended his reason; he doubted the proof and the interpretation of the textual authority.

In his perturbation, Arnold consulted Keble, who was at that time one of his closest friends, and a Fellow of the same College.

The subject of these distressing thoughts [Keble wrote to Coleridge] is that most awful one, on which all *very* inquisitive reasoning minds are, I believe, most liable to such temptations—I mean, the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Do not start, my dear Coleridge; I do not believe that Arnold has any serious scruples of the *understanding* about it, but it is a defect of his mind that he cannot get rid of a certain feeling of objections.

What was to be done? Keble's advice was peremptory. Arnold was "bid to pause in his inquiries, to pray earnestly for help

and light from above, and turn himself more strongly than ever to the practical duties of a holy life." He did so, and the result was all that could be wished. He soon found himself blessed with perfect peace of mind, and a settled conviction.

One other difficulty, and one only, we hear of, at this period of his life. His dislike of early rising amounted, we are told, "almost to a constitutional infirmity." This weakness too he overcame, yet not quite so successfully as his doubts upon the doctrine of the Trinity. For in after life the Doctor would often declare "that early rising continued to be a daily effort to him, and that in this instance he never found the truth of the usual rule, that all things are made easy by custom."

He married young, and settled down in the country as a private tutor for youths preparing for the Universities. There he remained for ten years—happy, busy, and sufficiently prosperous. Occupied chiefly with his pupils, he nevertheless devoted much of his energy to wider interests. He delivered a series of sermons in the parish church; and he began to write a History of Rome, in the hope, as he said, that its tone might be such "that the strictest of what is called the Evangelical party would not object to putting it into the hands of their children." His views on the religious and political condition of the country began to crystallise. He was alarmed by the "want of Christian principle in the literature of the day," looking forward anxiously to "the approach of a greater struggle between good and evil than the world has yet seen"; and, after a serious conversation with Dr. Whately, began to conceive the necessity of considerable alterations in the Church Establishment. All who knew him during these years were profoundly impressed by the earnestness of his religious convictions and feelings, which, as one observer said, "were ever bursting forth." It was impossible to disregard his "deep consciousness of the invisible world" and "the peculiar feeling of love and adoration which he entertained towards our Lord Jesus Christ." "His manner of awful reverence when speaking

of God or of the Scriptures" was particularly striking. "No one could know him even a little," said another friend, "and not be struck by his absolute wrestling with evil, so that like St. Paul he seemed to be battling with the wicked one, and yet with a feeling of God's help on his side."

Such was the man who, at the age of thirty-three, became headmaster of Rugby. His outward appearance was the index of his inward character: everything about him denoted energy, earnestness, and the best intentions. His legs, perhaps, were shorter than they should have been; but the sturdy athletic frame, especially when it was swathed (as it usually was) in the flowing robes of a Doctor of Divinity, was full of an imposing vigour; and his head, set decisively upon the collar, stock, and bands of ecclesiastical tradition, clearly belonged to a person of eminence. The thick, dark clusters of his hair, his bushy eyebrows and curling whiskers, his straight nose and bulky chin, his firm and upward-curving lower lip—all these revealed a temperament of ardour and determination. His eyes were bright and large; they were also obviously honest. And yet—why was it?—was it in the lines of the mouth or the frown on the forehead?—it was hard to say, but it was unmistakable—there was a slightly puzzled look upon the face of Dr. Arnold.

And certainly, if he was to fulfil the prophecy of the Provost of Oriel, the task before him was sufficiently perplexing. The public schools of those days were still virgin forests, untouched by the hand of reform. Keate was still reigning at Eton; and we possess, in the records of his pupils, a picture of the public school education of the early nineteenth century, in its most characteristic state. It was a system of anarchy tempered by despotism. Hundreds of boys, herded together in miscellaneous boarding-houses, or in that grim "Long Chamber" at whose name in after years aged statesmen and warriors would turn pale, lived, badgered and over-awed by the furious incursions of an irascible little old man carrying a bundle of

birch-twigs, a life in which licensed barbarism was mingled with the daily and hourly study of the niceties of Ovidian verse. It was a life of freedom and terror, of prosody and rebellion, of interminable floggings and appalling practical jokes. Keate ruled, unaided—for the undermasters were few and of no account—by sheer force of character. But there were times when even that indomitable will was overwhelmed by the flood of lawlessness. Every Sunday afternoon he attempted to read sermons to the whole school assembled; and every Sunday afternoon the whole school assembled shouted him down. The scenes in Chapel were far from edifying: while some antique Fellow doddered in the pulpit, rats would be let loose to scurry among the legs of the exploding boys. But next morning the hand of discipline would re-assert itself; and the savage ritual of the whipping-block would remind a batch of whimpering children that, though sins against man and God might be forgiven them, a false quantity could only be expiated in tears and blood.

From two sides, this system of education was beginning to be assailed by the awakening public opinion of the upper middle classes. On the one hand, there was a desire for a more liberal curriculum; on the other, there was a demand for a higher moral tone. The growing utilitarianism of the age viewed with impatience a course of instruction which excluded every branch of knowledge except classical philology; while its growing respectability was shocked by such a spectacle of disorder and brutality as was afforded by the Eton of Keate. "The Public Schools," said the Rev. Mr. Bowdler, "are the very seats and nurseries of vice."

Dr. Arnold agreed. He was convinced of the necessity for reform. But it was only natural that to one of his temperament and education it should have been the moral rather than the intellectual side of the question which impressed itself upon his mind. Doubtless it was important to teach boys something more than the bleak rigidities of the ancient tongues; but how



much more important to instil into them the elements of character and the principles of conduct! His great object, throughout his career at Rugby, was, as he repeatedly said, to "make the school a place of really Christian education." To introduce "a religious principle into education," was his "most earnest wish," he wrote to a friend when he first became headmaster; "but to do this would be to succeed beyond all my hopes; it would be a happiness so great, that, I think, the world would yield me nothing comparable to it." And he was constantly impressing these sentiments upon his pupils. "What I have often said before," he told them, "I repeat now: what we must look for here is, first, religious and moral principle; secondly, gentlemanly conduct; thirdly, intellectual ability."

There can be no doubt that Dr. Arnold's point of view was shared by the great mass of English parents. They cared very little for classical scholarship; no doubt they would be pleased to find that their sons were being instructed in history or in French, but their real hopes, their real wishes, were of a very different kind. "Shall I tell him to mind his work, and say he's sent to school to make himself a good scholar?" meditated old Squire Brown when he was sending off Tom for the first time to Rugby.

Well, but he isn't sent to school for that—at any rate, not for that mainly. I don't care a straw for Greek particles, or the digamma: no more does his mother. What is he sent to school for? . . . If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling Englishman, and a Christian, that's all I want.

That was all; and it was that that Dr. Arnold set himself to accomplish. But how was he to achieve his end? Was he to improve the character of his pupils by gradually spreading round them an atmosphere of cultivation and intelligence? By bringing them into close and friendly contact with civilised men, and even, perhaps, with civilised women? By introducing into the life of his school all that he could of the humane, enlightened, and progressive elements in the life of the com-

munity? On the whole, he thought not. Such considerations left him cold, and he preferred to be guided by the general laws of Providence. It only remained to discover what those general laws were. He consulted the Old Testament, and could doubt no longer. He would apply to his scholars, as he himself explained to them in one of his sermons, "the principle which seemed to him to have been adopted in the training of the childhood of the human race itself." He would treat the boys at Rugby as Jehovah had treated the Chosen People: he would found a theocracy; and there should be Judges in Israel.

For this purpose, the system, prevalent in most of the public schools of the day, by which the elder boys were deputed to keep order in the class-rooms, lay ready to Dr. Arnold's hand. He found the "Præpostor" a mere disciplinary convenience, and he converted him into an organ of government. Every boy in the Sixth Form became *ipso facto* a Præpostor, with powers extending over every department of school life; and the Sixth Form as a body was erected into an authority responsible to the headmaster, and to the headmaster alone, for the internal management of the school.

This was the means by which Dr. Arnold hoped to turn Rugby into "a place of really Christian education." The boys were to work out their own salvation, like the human race. He himself, involved in awful grandeur, ruled remotely, through his chosen instruments, from an inaccessible heaven. Remotely and yet with an omnipresent force. As the Israelite of old knew that his almighty Lawgiver might at any moment thunder to him from the whirlwind, or appear before his very eyes, the visible embodiment of power or wrath, so the Rugby schoolboy walked in a holy dread of some sudden manifestation of the sweeping gown, the majestic tone, the piercing glance, of Dr. Arnold. Among the lower forms of the school his appearances were rare and transitory, and upon these young children "the chief impression," we are told, "was of

extreme fear." The older boys saw more of him, but they did not see much. Outside the Sixth Form, no part of the school came into close intercourse with him; and it would often happen that a boy would leave Rugby without having had any personal communication with him at all. Yet the effect which he produced upon the great mass of his pupils was remarkable. The prestige of his presence and the elevation of his sentiments were things which it was impossible to forget. In class, every line of his countenance, every shade of his manner imprinted themselves indelibly on the minds of the boys who sat under him. One of these, writing long afterwards, has described, in phrases still impregnated with awestruck reverence, the familiar details of the scene:—"the glance with which he looked round in the few moments of silence before the lesson began, and which seemed to speak his sense of his own position"—"the attitude in which he stood, turning over the pages of Facciolati's Lexicon, or Pole's synopsis, with his eye fixed upon the boy who was pausing to give an answer"—"the pleased look and the cheerful 'thank you,' which followed upon a successful translation"—"the fall of his countenance with its deepening severity, the stern elevation of the eyebrows, the sudden 'sit down' which followed upon the reverse"—and "the startling earnestness with which he would check in a moment the slightest approach to levity."

To be rebuked, however mildly, by Dr. Arnold was a notable experience. One boy could never forget how he drew a distinction between "mere amusement" and "such as encroached on the next day's duties," nor the tone of voice with which the Doctor added "and then it immediately becomes what St. Paul calls *revelling*." Another remembered to his dying day his reproof of some boys who had behaved badly during prayers. "Nowhere," said Dr. Arnold, "nowhere is Satan's work more evidently manifest than in turning holy things to ridicule." On such occasions, as another of his pupils described it, it was impossible to avoid "a consciousness almost

amounting to solemnity" that, "when his eye was upon you, he looked into your inmost heart."

With the boys in the Sixth Form, and with them alone, the severe formality of his demeanour was to some degree relaxed. It was his wish, in his relations with the Præpostors, to allow the Master to be occasionally merged in the Friend. From time to time, he chatted with them in a familiar manner; once a term he asked them to dinner; and during the summer holidays he invited them, in rotation, to stay with him in Westmoreland.

It was obvious that the primitive methods of discipline which had reached their apogee under the dominion of Keate were altogether incompatible with Dr. Arnold's view of the functions of a headmaster and the proper governance of a public school. Clearly, it was not for such as he to demean himself by bellowing and cuffing, by losing his temper once an hour, and by wreaking his vengeance with indiscriminate flagellations. Order must be kept in other ways. The worst boys were publicly expelled; many were silently removed; and, when Dr. Arnold considered that a flogging was necessary, he administered it with gravity. (For he had no theoretical objection to corporal punishment. On the contrary, he supported it, as was his wont, by an appeal to general principles. "There is," he said, "an essential inferiority in a boy as compared with a man"; and hence "where there is no equality, the exercise of superiority implied in personal chastisement" inevitably followed. He was particularly disgusted by the view that "personal correction," as he phrased it, was an insult or a degradation to the boy upon whom it was inflicted; and to accustom young boys to think so appeared to him to be "positively mischievous.")

At an age [he wrote] when it is almost impossible to find a true, manly sense of the degradation of guilt or faults, where is the wisdom of encouraging a fantastic sense of the degradation of personal correction? What can be more false, or more

adverse to the simplicity, sobriety, and humbleness of mind which are the best ornaments of youth, and offer the best promise of a noble manhood?

One had not to look far, he added, for "the fruits of such a system." In Paris, during the Revolution of 1830, an officer observed a boy of twelve insulting the soldiers and

though the action was then raging, merely struck him with the flat part of his sword, as the fit chastisement for boyish impertinence. But the boy had been taught to consider his person sacred, and that a blow was a deadly insult; he therefore followed the officer, and having watched his opportunity, took deliberate aim at him with a pistol and murdered him.

Such were the alarming results of insufficient whipping.

Dr. Arnold did not apply this doctrine to the Præpostors; but the boys in the lower parts of the school felt its benefits with a double force. The Sixth Form was not only excused from chastisement; it was given the right to chastise. The younger children, scourged both by Dr. Arnold and by the elder children, were given every opportunity of acquiring the simplicity, sobriety, and humbleness of mind, which are the best ornaments of youth.

In the actual sphere of teaching, Dr. Arnold's reforms were tentative and few. He introduced modern history, modern languages, and mathematics into the school curriculum; but the results were not encouraging. He devoted to the teaching of history one hour a week; yet, though he took care to inculcate in these lessons a wholesome hatred of moral evil, and to point out from time to time the indications of the providential government of the world, his pupils never seemed to make much progress in the subject. Could it have been that the time allotted to it was insufficient? Dr. Arnold had some suspicions that this might be the case. With modern languages there was the same difficulty. Here his hopes were certainly not excessive. "I assume it," he wrote, "as the foundation of all

my view of the case, that boys at a public school never will learn to speak or pronounce French well, under any circumstances." It would be enough if they could "learn it grammatically as a dead language." But even this they very seldom managed to do.

I know too well [he was obliged to confess] that most of the boys would pass a very poor examination even in French grammar. But so it is with their mathematics; and so it will be with any branch of knowledge that is taught but seldom, and is felt to be quite subordinate to the boys' main study.

The boys' main study remained the dead languages of Greece and Rome. That the classics should form the basis of all teaching was an axiom with Dr. Arnold. "The study of language," he said, "seems to me as if it was given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages seem the very instruments by which this is to be effected." Certainly, there was something providential about it—from the point of view of the teacher as well as of the taught. If Greek and Latin had not been "given" in that convenient manner, Dr. Arnold, who had spent his life in acquiring those languages, might have discovered that he had acquired them in vain. As it was, he could set the noses of his pupils to the grindstone of syntax and prosody with a clear conscience. Latin verses and Greek prepositions divided between them the labours of the week. As time went on, he became, he declared, "increasingly convinced that it is not knowledge, but the means of gaining knowledge which I have to teach." The reading of the school was devoted almost entirely to selected passages from the prose writers of antiquity. "Boys," he remarked, "do not like poetry." Perhaps his own poetical taste was a little dubious; at any rate, it is certain that he considered the Greek Tragedians greatly overrated, and that he ranked Propertius as "an indifferent poet." As for Aristophanes, owing to his strong moral disapprobation,

he could not bring himself to read him until he was forty, when, it is true, he was much struck by the "Clouds." But Juvenal the Doctor could never bring himself to read at all.

Physical science was not taught at Rugby. Since, in Dr. Arnold's opinion, it was "too great a subject to be studied en pareryo," obviously only two alternatives were possible:—it must either take the chief place in the school curriculum, or it must be left out altogether. Before such a choice, Dr. Arnold did not hesitate for a moment.

Rather than have physical science the principal thing in my son's mind [he exclaimed in a letter to a friend], I would gladly have him think that the sun went round the earth, and that the stars were so many spangles set in the bright blue firmament. Surely the one thing needful for a Christian and an Englishman to study is Christian and moral and political philosophy.

A Christian and an Englishman! After all, it was not in the class-room, nor in the boarding-house, that the essential elements of instruction could be imparted which should qualify the youthful neophyte to deserve those names. The final, the fundamental lesson could only be taught in the school chapel; in the school chapel the centre of Dr. Arnold's system of education was inevitably fixed. There, too, the Doctor himself appeared in the plenitude of his dignity and his enthusiasm. There, with the morning sun shining on the freshly scrubbed faces of his three hundred pupils, or, in the dusk of evening, through a glimmer of candles, his stately form, rapt in devotion or vibrant with exhortation, would dominate the scene. Every phase of the Church service seemed to receive its supreme expression in his voice, his attitude, his look. During the *Te Deum*, his whole countenance would light up; and he read the Psalms with such conviction that boys would often declare, after hearing him, that they understood them now for the first time. It was his opinion that the creeds in public worship ought to be used as triumphant hymns of thanksgiv-

ing, and, in accordance with this view, although unfortunately he possessed no natural gift for music, he regularly joined in the chanting of the Nicene Creed with a visible animation and a peculiar fervour, which it was impossible to forget. The Communion service he regarded as a direct and special counterpoise to that false communion and false companionship, which, as he often observed, was a great source of mischief in the school; and he bent himself down with glistening eyes, and trembling voice, and looks of paternal solicitude, in the administration of the elements. Nor was it only the different sections of the liturgy, but the very divisions of the ecclesiastical year that reflected themselves in his demeanour; the most careless observer, we are told, "could not fail to be struck by the triumphant exultation of his whole manner on Easter Sunday"; though it needed a more familiar eye to discern the subtleties in his bearing which were produced by the approach of Advent, and the solemn thoughts which it awakened of the advance of human life, the progress of the human race, and the condition of the Church of England.

At the end of the evening service the culminating moment of the week had come: the Doctor delivered his sermon. It was not until then, as all who had known him agreed, it was not until one had heard and seen him in the pulpit that one could fully realise what it was to be face to face with Dr. Arnold. The whole character of the man—so we are assured—stood at last revealed. His congregation sat in fixed attention (with the exception of the younger boys, whose thoughts occasionally wandered), while he propounded the general principles both of his own conduct and that of the Almighty, or indicated the bearing of the incidents of Jewish history in the sixth century B.C. upon the conduct of English schoolboys in 1830. Then, more than ever, his deep consciousness of the invisible world became evident; then, more than ever, he seemed to be battling with the wicked one. For his sermons ran on the eternal themes of the darkness of evil, the craft of



the tempter, the punishment of obliquity, and he justified the persistence with which he dwelt upon these painful subjects by an appeal to a general principle: "the spirit of Elijah," he said, "must ever precede the spirit of Christ." The impression produced upon the boys was remarkable. It was noticed that even the most careless would sometimes, during the course of the week, refer almost involuntarily to the sermon of the past Sunday, as a condemnation of what they were doing. Others were heard to wonder how it was that the Doctor's preaching, to which they had attended at the time so assiduously, seemed, after all, to have such a small effect upon what they did. An old gentleman, recalling those vanished hours, tried to recapture in words his state of mind as he sat in the darkened chapel, while Dr. Arnold's sermons, with their high-toned exhortations, their grave and sombre messages of incalculable import clothed like Dr. Arnold's body in its gown and bands, in the traditional stiffness of a formal phraseology, reverberated through his adolescent ears. "I used," he said, "to listen to those sermons from first to last with a kind of awe."

His success was not limited to his pupils and immediate auditors. The sermons were collected into five large volumes; they were the first of their kind; and they were received with admiration by a wide circle of pious readers. Queen Victoria herself possessed a copy, in which several passages were marked in pencil, by the royal hand.

Dr. Arnold's energies were by no means exhausted by his duties at Rugby. He became known, not merely as a Headmaster, but as a public man. He held decided opinions upon a large number of topics; and he enunciated them—based as they were almost invariably upon general principles—in pamphlets, in prefaces, and in magazine articles, with an impressive self-confidence. He was, as he constantly declared, a Liberal. In his opinion, by the very constitution of human nature, the prin-

ciples of progress and reform had been those of wisdom and justice in every age of the world—except one: that which had preceded the fall of man from Paradise. Had he lived then, Dr. Arnold would have been a Conservative. As it was, his liberalism was tempered by an “abhorrence of the spirit of 1789, of the American War, of the French Economistes, and of the English Whigs of the latter part of the seventeenth century”; and he always entertained a profound respect for the hereditary peerage. It might almost be said, in fact, that he was an orthodox Liberal. He believed in toleration, too, within limits; that is to say, in the toleration of those with whom he agreed. “I would give James Mill as much opportunity for advocating his opinion,” he said, “as is consistent with a voyage to Botany Bay.” He had become convinced of the duty of sympathising with the lower orders ever since he had made a serious study of the Epistle of St. James; but he perceived clearly that the lower orders fell into two classes, and that it was necessary to distinguish between them. There were the “good poor”—and there were the others. “I am glad that you have made acquaintance with some of the good poor,” he wrote to a Cambridge undergraduate; “I quite agree with you that it is most instructive to visit them.” Dr. Arnold himself occasionally visited them, in Rugby; and the condescension with which he shook hands with old men and women of the working classes was long remembered in the neighbourhood. As for the others, he regarded them with horror and alarm.

The disorders in our social state [he wrote the Chevalier Brunsen in 1834] appear to me to continue unabated. You have heard, I doubt not, of the Trades’ Unions; a fearful engine of mischief, ready to riot or to assassinate; and I see no counter-acting power.

On the whole, his view of the condition of England was a gloomy one. He recommended a correspondent to read

Isaiah iii., v., xxii.; Jeremiah v., xxii., xxx.; Amos iv.; and Habakkuk ii., [adding] you will be struck. I think, with the close

resemblance of our own state with that of the Jews before the second destruction of Jerusalem.

When he was told that the gift of tongues had descended on the Irvingites at Glasgow, he was not surprised. "I should take it," he said, "merely as a sign of the coming of the day of the Lord." And he was convinced that the day of the Lord *was* coming—"the termination of one of the great αἰῶνες of the human race." Of that he had no doubt whatever; wherever he looked he saw "calamities, wars, tumults, pestilences, earthquakes, etc., all marking the time of one of God's peculiar seasons of visitation." His only uncertainty was whether this termination of an αἰὼν would turn out to be the absolutely final one; but that he believed "no created being knows or can know." In any case he had "not the slightest expectation of what is commonly meant by the Millennium." And his only consolation was that he preferred the present ministry, inefficient as it was, to the Tories.

He had planned a great work on Church and State, in which he intended to lay bare the causes and to point out the remedies of the evils which afflicted society. Its theme was to be, not the alliance or union, but the absolute identity of the Church and the State; and he felt sure that if only this fundamental truth were fully realised by the public, a general reformation would follow. Unfortunately, however, as time went on, the public seemed to realise it less and less. In spite of his protests, not only were Jews admitted to Parliament, but a Jew was actually appointed a governor of Christ's Hospital; and Scripture was not made an obligatory subject at the London University.

There was one point in his theory which was not quite plain to Dr. Arnold. If Church and State were absolutely identical, it became important to decide precisely which classes of persons were to be excluded, owing to their beliefs, from the community. Jews, for instance, were decidedly outside the pale; while Dissenters—so Dr. Arnold argued—were as decidedly

within it. But what was the position of the Unitarians? Were they, or were they not, Members of the Church of Christ? This was one of those puzzling questions which deepened the frown upon the Doctor's forehead and intensified the pursing of his lips. He thought long and earnestly upon the subject; he wrote elaborate letters on it to various correspondents; but his conclusions remained indefinite. "My great objection to Unitarianism," he wrote, "in its present form in England, is that it makes Christ virtually dead." Yet he expressed "a fervent hope that if we could get rid of the Athanasian Creed many good Unitarians would join their fellow-Christians in bowing the knee to Him who is Lord both of the dead and the living." Amid these perplexities, it was disquieting to learn that "Unitarianism is becoming very prevalent in Boston." He inquired anxiously as to its "complexion" there; but received no illuminating answer. The whole matter continued to be wrapped in a painful obscurity; there were, he believed, Unitarians and Unitarians; and he could say no more.

In the meantime, pending the completion of his great work, he occupied himself with putting forward various suggestions of a practical kind. He advocated the restoration of the Order of Deacons, which, he observed, had long been "quoad the reality, dead"; for he believed that "some plan of this sort might be the small end of the wedge, by which Antichrist might hereafter be burst asunder like the Dragon of Bel's temple." But the Order of Deacons was never restored, and Dr. Arnold turned his attention elsewhere, urging in a weighty pamphlet the desirability of authorising military officers, in congregations where it was impossible to procure the presence of clergy, to administer the Eucharist, as well as Baptism. It was with the object of laying such views as these before the public—"to tell them plainly," as he said, "the evils that exist, and lead them, if I can, to their causes and remedies,"—that he started, in 1831, a weekly newspaper, *The Englishman's Register*. The paper was not a success, in spite of the fact that

it set out to improve its readers morally and that it preserved, in every article, an avowedly Christian tone. After a few weeks, and after he had spent upon it more than £200, it came to an end.

Altogether, the prospect was decidedly discouraging. After all his efforts, the absolute identity of Church and State remained as unrecognised as ever.

So deeply [he was at last obliged to confess] is the distinction between the Church and the State seated in our laws, our language, and our very notions, that nothing less than a miraculous interposition of God's Providence seems capable of eradicating it.

Dr. Arnold waited in vain.

But he did not wait in idleness. He attacked the same question from another side: he explored the writings of the Christian Fathers, and began to compose a commentary on the New Testament. In his view, the Scriptures were as fit a subject as any other book for free inquiry and the exercise of the individual judgment, and it was in this spirit that he set about the interpretation of them. He was not afraid of facing apparent difficulties, of admitting inconsistencies, or even errors, in the sacred text. Thus he observed that "in Chronicles xi. 20, and xiii. 2, there is a decided difference in the parentage of Abijah's mother;"—"which," he added, "is curious on any supposition." And at one time he had serious doubts as to the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But he was able, on various problematical points, to suggest interesting solutions. At first, for instance, he could not but be startled by the cessation of miracles in the early Church; but on consideration he came to the conclusion that this phenomenon might be "truly accounted for by the supposition that none but the Apostles ever conferred miraculous powers, and that therefore they ceased of course after one generation." Nor did he fail to base his exegesis, whenever possible, upon an appeal to general principles. One of his admirers points out how Dr. Arnold

vindicated God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son, and to the Jews to exterminate the nations of Canaan, by explaining the principles on which these commands were given, and their reference to the moral state of those to whom they were addressed; thereby educing light out of darkness, unravelling the thread of God's religious education of the human race, and holding up God's marvellous counsels to the devout wonder and meditation of the thoughtful believer.

There was one of his friends, however, who did not share this admiration for the Doctor's methods of Scriptural interpretation. W. G. Ward, while still a young man at Oxford, had come under his influence, and had been for some time one of his most enthusiastic disciples. But the star of Newman was rising at the University; Ward soon felt the attraction of that magnetic power; and his belief in his old teacher began to waver. It was, in particular, Dr. Arnold's treatment of the Scriptures which filled Ward's argumentative mind, at first with distrust, and at last with positive antagonism. To subject the Bible to free inquiry, to exercise upon it the criticism of the individual judgment—where might not such methods lead? Who could say that they would not end in Socinianism?—nay, in Atheism itself? If the text of Scripture was to be submitted to the searchings of human reason, how could the question of its inspiration escape the same tribunal? And the proofs of revelation, and even of the existence of God? What human faculty was capable of deciding upon such enormous questions? And would not the logical result be a condition of universal doubt?

On a very moderate computation [Ward argued] five times the amount of a man's natural life might qualify a person endowed with extraordinary genius to have some faint notion (though even this we doubt) on which side truth lies.

It was not that he had the slightest doubt of Dr. Arnold's orthodoxy—Dr. Arnold, whose piety was universally recognised

—Dr. Arnold, who had held up to scorn and execration Strauss's "Leben Jesu" without reading it. What Ward complained of was the Doctor's lack of logic, not his lack of faith. Could he not see that if he really carried out his own principles to a logical conclusion he would eventually find himself, precisely, in the arms of Strauss? The young man, whose personal friendship remained unshaken, determined upon an interview, and went down to Rugby primed with first principles, syllogisms, and dilemmas. Finding that the headmaster was busy in school he spent the afternoon reading novels on the sofa in the drawing-room. When at last, late in the evening, the Doctor returned, tired out with his day's work, Ward fell upon him with all his vigour. The contest was long and furious; it was also entirely inconclusive. When it was over, Ward with none of his brilliant arguments disposed of, and none of his probing questions satisfactorily answered, returned to the University, to plunge headlong into the vortex of the Oxford Movement; and Dr. Arnold, worried, perplexed, and exhausted, went to bed, where he remained for the next thirty-six hours.

The Commentary on the New Testament was never finished, and the great work on Church and State itself remained a fragment. Dr. Arnold's active mind was diverted from political and theological speculations to the study of philology and to historical composition. His Roman History, which he regarded as "the chief monument of his historical fame" was based partly upon the researches of Niebuhr, and partly upon an aversion to Gibbon.

My highest ambition [he wrote] is to make my history the very reverse of Gibbon—in this respect, that whereas the whole spirit of his work, from its low morality, is hostile to religion, without speaking directly against it, so my greatest desire would be, in my History, by its high morals and its general tone, to be of use to the cause without actually bringing it forward.

These efforts were rewarded, in 1841, by the Professorship of Modern History at Oxford. Meanwhile, he was engaged in the study of the Sanscrit and Slavonic languages, bringing out an elaborate edition of Thucydides, and carrying on a voluminous correspondence upon a multitude of topics with a large circle of men of learning. At his death, his published works, composed during such intervals as he could spare from the management of a great public school, filled, besides a large number of pamphlets and articles, no less than seventeen volumes. It was no wonder that Carlyle, after a visit to Rugby, should have characterised Dr. Arnold as a man of "unhasting, unresting diligence."

Mrs. Arnold, too, no doubt agreed with Carlyle. During the first eight years of their married life, she bore him six children; and four more were to follow. In this large and growing domestic circle his hours of relaxation were spent. There those who had only known him in his professional capacity were surprised to find him displaying the tenderness and jocosity of a parent. The dignified and stern headmaster was actually seen to dandle infants and to caracole upon the hearthrug on all fours. Yet, we are told, "the sense of his authority as a father was never lost in his playfulness as a companion." On more serious occasions, the voice of the spiritual teacher sometimes made itself heard. An intimate friend described how "on a comparison having been made in his family circle, which seemed to place St. Paul above St. John," the tears rushed to the Doctor's eyes and how, repeating one of the verses from St. John, he begged that the comparison might never again be made. The longer holidays were spent in Westmoreland, where, rambling with his offspring among the mountains, gathering wild flowers, and pointing out the beauties of Nature, Dr. Arnold enjoyed, as he himself would often say, "an almost awful happiness." Music he did not appreciate, though he occasionally desired his eldest boy, Matthew, to sing him



the Confirmation Hymn of Dr. Hinds, to which he had become endeared, owing to its use in Rugby chapel. But his lack of ear was, he considered, amply recompensed by his love of flowers: "they are my music," he declared. Yet, in such a matter, he was careful to refrain from an excess of feeling, such as, in his opinion, marked the famous lines of Wordsworth:

To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

He found the sentiment morbid. "Life," he said, "is not long enough to take such intense interest in objects in themselves so little." As for the animal world, his feelings towards it were of a very different cast. "The whole subject," he said, "of the brute creation is to me one of such painful mystery, that I dare not approach it." The Unitarians themselves were a less distressing thought.

Once or twice he found time to visit the Continent, and the letters and journals recording in minute detail his reflections and impressions in France or Italy show us that Dr. Arnold preserved, in spite of the distractions of foreign scenes and foreign manners, his accustomed habits of mind. Taking very little interest in works of art, he was occasionally moved by the beauty of natural objects; but his principal pre-occupation remained with the moral aspects of things. From this point of view, he found much to reprehend in the conduct of his own countrymen. "I fear," he wrote, "that our countrymen who live abroad are not in the best possible moral state, however much they may do in science or literature." And this was unfortunate, because "a thorough English gentleman—Christian, manly, and enlightened—is more, I believe, than Guizot or Sismondi could comprehend; it is a finer specimen of human nature than any other country, I believe, could furnish." Nevertheless, our travellers would imitate foreign customs without discrimination, "as in the absurd habit of not eating fish with a knife, borrowed from the French, who do it because

they have no knives fit for use." Places, no less than people, aroused similar reflections. By Pompeii, Dr. Arnold was not particularly impressed.

There is only [he observed] the same sort of interest with which one would see the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah but indeed there is less. One is not authorised to ascribe so solemn a character to the destruction of Pompeii.

The lake of Como moved him more profoundly. As he gazed upon the overwhelming beauty around him, he thought of "moral evil," and was appalled by the contrast. "May the sense of moral evil," he prayed, "be as strong in me as my delight in external beauty, for in a deep sense of moral evil, more perhaps than in anything else, abides a saving knowledge of God!"

His prayer was answered: Dr. Arnold was never in any danger of losing his sense of moral evil. If the landscapes of Italy only served to remind him of it, how could he forget it among the boys at Rugby School? The daily sight of so many young creatures in the hands of the Evil One filled him with agitated grief.

When the spring and activity of youth [he wrote] is altogether unsanctified by anything pure and elevated in its desires, it becomes a spectacle that is as dizzying and almost more morally distressing than the shouts and gambols of a set of lunatics.

One thing struck him as particularly strange: "it is very startling," he said, "to see so much of sin combined with so little of sorrow." The naughtiest boys positively seemed to enjoy themselves most. There were moments when he almost lost faith in his whole system of education, when he began to doubt whether some far more radical reforms than any he had attempted might not be necessary, before the multitude of children under his charge—shouting and gamboling, and yet plunged all the while deep in moral evil—could ever be

transformed into a set of Christian gentlemen. But then he remembered his general principles, the conduct of Jehovah with the Chosen People, and the childhood of the human race. No, it was for him to make himself, as one of his pupils afterwards described him, in the words of Bacon, "kin to God in spirit"; he would rule the school majestically from on high. He would deliver a series of sermons analysing "the six vices" by which "great schools were corrupted, and changed from the likeness of God's temple to that of a den of thieves." He would exhort, he would denounce, he would sweep through the corridors, he would turn the pages of Facciolati's lexicon more imposingly than ever; and the rest he would leave to the Præpostors in the Sixth Form.

Upon the boys in the Sixth Form, indeed, a strange burden would seem to have fallen. Dr. Arnold himself was very well aware of this. "I cannot deny," he told them in a sermon, "that you have an anxious duty—a duty which some might suppose was too heavy for your years"; and every term he pointed out to them, in a short address, the responsibilities of their position, and impressed upon them "the enormous influence" they possessed "for good or for evil." Nevertheless most youths of seventeen, in spite of the warnings of their elders, have a singular trick of carrying moral burdens lightly. The Doctor might preach and look grave; but young Brooke was ready enough to preside at a fight behind the Chapel, though he was in the Sixth, and knew that fighting was against the rules. At their best, it may be supposed that the Præpostors administered a kind of barbaric justice; but they were not always at their best, and the pages of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* show us what was no doubt the normal condition of affairs under Dr. Arnold, when the boys in the Sixth Form were weak or brutal, and the blackguard Flashman, in the intervals of swigging brandy-punch with his boon companions, amused himself by roasting fags before the fire.

But there was an exceptional kind of boy, upon whom the

high-pitched exhortations of Dr. Arnold produced a very different effect. A minority of susceptible and serious youths fell completely under his sway, responded like wax to the pressure of his influence, and moulded their whole lives with passionate reverence upon the teaching of their adored master. Conspicuous among these was Arthur Clough. Having been sent to Rugby at the age of ten, he quickly entered into every phase of school life, though, we are told, "a weakness in his ankles prevented him from taking a prominent part in the games of the place." At the age of sixteen, he was in the Sixth Form, and not merely a Præpostor, but head of the School House. Never did Dr. Arnold have an apter pupil. This earnest adolescent, with the weak ankles and the solemn face, lived entirely with the highest ends in view. He thought of nothing but moral good, moral evil, moral influence, and moral responsibility. Some of his early letters have been preserved, and they reveal both the intensity with which he felt the importance of his own position, and the strange stress of spirit under which he laboured. "I have been in one continued state of excitement for at least the last three years," he wrote when he was not yet seventeen, "and now comes the time of exhaustion." But he did not allow himself to rest, and a few months later he was writing to a schoolfellow as follows:—

I verily believe my whole being is soaked through with the wishing and hoping and striving to do the school good, or rather to keep it up and hinder it from falling in this, I do think, very critical time, so that my cares and affections and conversations, thoughts, words, and deeds look to that involuntarily. I am afraid you will be inclined to think this "cant," and I am conscious that even one's truest feelings, if very frequently put out in the light, do make a bad and disagreeable appearance; but this, however, is true, and even if I am carrying it too far, I do not think it has made me really forgetful of my personal friends, such as, in particular, Gell and Burbidge and Walrond, and yourself, my dear Simpkinson.

Perhaps it was not surprising that a young man brought up in such an atmosphere should have fallen a prey, at Oxford, to the frenzies of religious controversy; that he should have been driven almost out of his wits by the ratiocinations of W. G. Ward; that he should have lost his faith; that he should have spent the rest of his existence lamenting that loss, both in prose and verse; and that he should have eventually succumbed, conscientiously doing up brown paper parcels for Florence Nightingale.

In the earlier years of his headmastership Dr. Arnold had to face a good deal of opposition. His advanced religious views were disliked, and there were many parents to whom his system of school government did not commend itself. But in time this hostility melted away. Succeeding generations of favourite pupils began to spread his fame through the Universities. At Oxford especially men were profoundly impressed by the pious aims of the boys from Rugby. It was a new thing to see undergraduates going to Chapel more often than they were obliged, and visiting the good poor. Their reverent admiration for Dr. Arnold was no less remarkable. Whenever two of his old pupils met they joined in his praises; and the sight of his picture had been known to call forth, from one who had not even reached the Sixth, exclamations of rapture lasting for ten minutes and filling with astonishment the young men from other schools who happened to be present. He became a celebrity; he became at last a great man. Rugby prospered; its numbers rose higher than ever before; and, after thirteen years as headmaster, Dr. Arnold began to feel that his work there was accomplished, and that he might look forward either to other labours or, perhaps, to a dignified retirement. But it was not to be.

His father had died suddenly at the age of fifty-three from angina pectoris; and he himself was haunted by forebodings of an early death. To be snatched away without a warning, to come in a moment from the seductions of this World to the

presence of Eternity—the most ordinary actions, the most casual remarks, served to keep him in remembrance of that dreadful possibility. When one of his little boys clapped his hands at the thought of the approaching holidays, the Doctor gently checked him, and repeated the story of his own early childhood; how his own father had made him read aloud a sermon on the text “Boast not thyself of to-morrow”; and how, within the week, his father was dead. On the title-page of his MS. volume of sermons he was always careful to write the date of its commencement, leaving a blank for that of its completion. One of his children asked him the meaning of this. “It is one of the most solemn things I do,” he replied, “to write the beginning of that sentence, and think that I may perhaps not live to finish it.”

It was noticed that in the spring of 1842 such thoughts seemed to be even more frequently than usual in his mind. He was only in his forty-seventh year, but he dwelt darkly on the fragility of human existence. Towards the end of May, he began to keep a diary—a private memorandum of his intimate communings with the Almighty. Here, evening after evening, in the traditional language of religious devotion, he humbled himself before God, prayed for strength and purity, and threw himself upon the mercy of the Most High.

Another day and another month succeed [he wrote on May 31st]. May God keep my mind and heart fixed on Him, and cleanse me from all sin. I would wish to keep a watch over my tongue, as to vehement speaking and censuring of others. . . . I would desire to remember my latter end to which I am approaching. . . . May God keep me in the hour of death, through Jesus Christ; and preserve me from every fear, as well as from presumption.

On June 2nd he wrote, “Again the day is over and I am going to rest. O Lord, preserve me this night, and strengthen me to bear whatever Thou shalt see fit to lay on me, whether pain, sickness, danger, or distress.” On Sunday, June 5th, the read-

ing of the newspaper aroused "painful and solemn" reflections.—"So much of sin and so much of suffering in the world, as are there displayed, and no one seems able to remedy either. And then the thought of my own private life, so full of comforts, is very startling." He was puzzled; but he concluded with a prayer: "May I be kept humble and zealous, and may God give me grace to labour in my generation for the good of my brethren, and for His Glory!"

The end of the term was approaching, and to all appearance the Doctor was in excellent spirits. On June 11th after a hard day's work, he spent the evening with a friend in the discussion of various topics upon which he often touched in his conversation—the comparison of the art of medicine in barbarous and civilised ages, the philological importance of provincial vocabularies, and the threatening prospect of the moral condition of the United States. Left alone, he turned to his Diary.

The day after to-morrow [he wrote] is my birthday, if I am permitted to live to see it—my forty-seventh birthday since my birth. How large a portion of my life on earth is already passed! And then—what is to follow this life? How visibly my outward work seems contracting and softening away into the gentler employments of old age. In one sense, how nearly can I now say, "Vixi." And I thank God that, as far as ambition is concerned, it is, I trust, fully mortified; I have no desire other than to step back from my present place in the world, and not to rise to a higher. Still there are works which, with God's permission, I would do before the night cometh.

Dr. Arnold was thinking of his great work on Church and State.

Early next morning he awoke with a sharp pain in his chest. The pain increasing, a physician was sent for; and in the meantime Mrs. Arnold read aloud to her husband the Fifty-first Psalm. Upon one of their boys coming into the room,

My son, thank God for me [said Dr. Arnold; and as the boy did not at once catch his meaning, he added], Thank God,

Tom, for giving me this pain; I have suffered so little pain in my life that I feel it is very good for me. Now God has given it to me, and I do so thank Him for it.

Then Mrs. Arnold read from the Prayer-book the "Visitation of the Sick," her husband listening with deep attention, and assenting with an emphatic "Yes" at the end of many of the sentences. When the physician arrived, he perceived at once the gravity of the case: it was an attack of angina pectoris. He began to prepare some laudanum, while Mrs. Arnold went out to fetch the children. All at once, as the medical man was bending over his glasses, there was a rattle from the bed; a convulsive struggle followed; and, when the unhappy woman, with the children, and all the servants, rushed into the room, Dr. Arnold had passed from his perplexities for ever.

There can be little doubt that what he had achieved justified the prediction of the Provost of Oriel that he would "change the face of education all through the public schools of England." It is true that, so far as the actual machinery of education was concerned, Dr. Arnold not only failed to effect a change, but deliberately adhered to the old system. The monastic and literary conceptions of education, which had their roots in the Middle Ages, and had been accepted and strengthened at the revival of Learning, he adopted almost without hesitation. Under him, the public school remained, in essentials, a conventual establishment, devoted to the teaching of Greek and Latin grammar. Had he set on foot reforms in these directions, it seems probable that he might have succeeded in carrying the parents of England with him. The moment was ripe; there was a general desire for educational changes, and Dr. Arnold's great reputation could hardly have been resisted. As it was, he threw the whole weight of his influence into the opposite scale, and the ancient system became more firmly established than ever.

The changes which he did effect were of a very different nature. By introducing morals and religion into his scheme of



education, he altered the whole atmosphere of Public School life. Henceforward the old rough-and-tumble, which was typified by the régime of Keate at Eton, became impossible. After Dr. Arnold, no public school could venture to ignore the virtues of respectability. Again, by his introduction of the prefectorial system, Dr. Arnold produced far-reaching effects—effects which he himself, perhaps, would have found perplexing. In his day, when the school hours were over, the boys were free to enjoy themselves as they liked; to bathe, to fish, to ramble for long afternoons in the country, collecting eggs or gathering flowers. “The taste of the boys at this period,” writes an old Rugbæan who had been under Arnold, “leaned strongly towards flowers”; the words have an odd look to-day. The modern reader of *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* searches in vain for any reference to compulsory games, house colours, or cricket averages. In those days, when boys played games they played them for pleasure; but in those days the prefectorial system—the system which hands over the life of a school to an oligarchy of a dozen youths of seventeen—was still in its infancy, and had not yet borne its fruit. Teachers and prophets have strange after-histories; and that of Dr. Arnold has been no exception. The earnest enthusiast who strove to make his pupils Christian gentlemen and who governed his school according to the principles of the Old Testament has proved to be the founder of the worship of athletics and the worship of good form. Upon those two poles our public schools have turned for so long that we have almost come to believe that such is their essential nature, and that an English public schoolboy who wears the wrong clothes and takes no interest in football is a contradiction in terms. Yet it was not so before Dr. Arnold; will it always be so after him? We shall see.

## COMMENT

Ours is an analytical age. Instructed by the works of Marx and Freud and the spectacular successes of the physical scientists, we are not satisfied with perceiving things. We want to know what they are made of, how they got that way, and what significance they have. Thus in biography and autobiography we look for more than simply facts such as the essay "Guy Fawkes" provides. Accordingly, biographers (and in this term are included autobiographers) have turned to psychology, sociology, philosophy, the history of ideas, and other special branches of learning for means to interpret and appraise their subjects. As a result, most biographies and biographical essays resemble the essays of the second section in their general purpose and achievements.

Sometimes, however, the biographer uses his subject as material for art. He selects and arranges his material not only to inform the reader but also to exhibit a high degree of aesthetic interest growing out of the interaction of all the elements in the final work. Like the portrait painter, he tries to give a truthful representation of his subject and at the same time to achieve appropriateness, consistency, tension, and, above all, integration. Obviously he cannot use all of the details available to him, for, again like the portrait painter, he is limited to those which have a place in the aesthetically interesting pattern he seeks to construct. Inevitably there must be some distortion, but this is compensated for by the vividness and concreteness of the representation and by the fact that in truly literary work the distortion is part of the meaning and helps to express insights which would otherwise be impossible. In a great biography, as in a painting by Van Gogh, distortion is revelation.

This essay on Dr. Arnold by Lytton Strachey is well-suited to the study of biography as art because in it we can see both the achievements possible to the type and some of the shortcomings that may (though they need not) result from concern with aesthetic interest; and also because it is one of four essays, collected under the title *Eminent Victorians*, which started a new school of biography very

popular in our day. The purpose of the essay is obviously not to give a complete account of Dr. Arnold. The length of the essay forbids that. (Yet the essay on Dr. Arnold by Theodore Walrond in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, only about one-tenth as long, contains many facts omitted from this work, which suggests how much considerations other than the presentation of facts had to do with the selection of the details.) Rather, the purpose seems to be to present those significant aspects of the man that can be fitted into an aesthetically interesting pattern and to let these imply the others needed to make the whole person.

The opening paragraph gives some idea of how limited is the representation within the final pattern. Surely, we think, this is not the whole story of Arnold's appointment: there must have been more than the letter from Dr. Hawkins involved. But suppose more were told here. We might not perceive quite as fully the appropriateness, consistency, tension, and integration among these and the other details that suggest slapdash educational methods, trivial theories, and the advantages to Arnold's career of mere pomposity of manner over sound training and intelligent understanding. And we might miss the evaluation of Arnold and his world because, for one thing, we might be less certain of the tone by which much of the evaluation is expressed. As it is, the tone is established with swiftness and economy, and is maintained, while gradually accumulating significance and intensity, throughout the piece.

Elsewhere a similarly rigorous selectivity marks the representation of Arnold's religious doubts, which though they may have caused him great agony are made to seem almost petty. A cleverly chosen fragment from a letter of *one* of Arnold's contemporaries damns the doctor, by its naive and devastating "merely," with the faintest of well-meant praise. In our enjoyment of the essayist's adroitness we may forget to ask what the rest of the letter might have said, how competent young Coleridge was as an observer, and how much faith should be put in proof by a single instance. The essay juxtaposes the religious doubts with Arnold's dislike of early rising (the "One other difficulty . . . we hear of at this time"), which further diminishes the importance of the doubts. (Here we see in action the "transfer" device referred to in the comment on "Science and General Education." We also see how remarkably

details can work upon each other in a tightly integrated essay.) With wicked wit the seemingly neutral and artless sentence, "It was impossible to disregard his 'Deep consciousness of the invisible world' . . .," suggests that Arnold aggressively thrust his private concerns upon others who, whether they wished it or not, could only be "profoundly impressed."

This is effective technique. So is the sly organization of the paragraph which ends with mention of Arnold's puzzled expression. Or the delicately improper "Mrs. Arnold, too, no doubt agreed with Carlyle." Or the omission of the more obvious devices for evoking the tone, and the dependence upon simple prose in a simple but expressive and closely organized structure. For by this omission the essayist seems to retire and let the facts speak for themselves. Actually, of course, though we may tend to forget it, not all the facts are allowed to speak, and those that do, speak, as we have seen, in a special way determined by Strachey, who is anything but retired. All this is effective, surely, but does it lead to biography?

If biography consisted only in giving a convincing portrait and interpretation of a whole man, the answer would certainly be "Yes." For Strachey has succeeded as a good painter does: the details not given are easily inferred from those that are, and the representation has concreteness. But since biography consists in giving a convincing portrait and interpretation not just of a whole man—any whole man—but of a particular individual, the answer is "No." Examination of other studies<sup>1</sup> reveals that the whole man represented here is not exactly Dr. Thomas Arnold. The distortion inevitable in biography has been pushed too far, and the details suggested are not the same as the actual ones omitted from the essay.

The fault lies with the artist, not the art; with the use made of selection and arrangement, not the processes themselves. The essay is a genuine piece of literature. As such, it stands up well under analysis: it exhibits the qualities upon which an exceptional degree of aesthetic interest depends. But it is literature not because it is unsatisfactory as biography but in spite of that fact.

<sup>1</sup> Walrond's article in the *DNB*, referred to above; R. J. Campbell, *Thomas Arnold* (1927); Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D.D.* (1844); Arnold Whitridge, *Dr. Arnold of Rugby* (1928).

Without any loss of excellence, this essay could have provided a truthful representation of the man and a unique interpretation and appraisal of his character and works. The essay "Trooper Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke" is true to its subject, but is nonetheless literature and a distinctly personal interpretation and appraisal of Samuel Taylor Coleridge as a young man.

Flawed as it is, Strachey's essay is a valuable piece of writing and a revealing, if not wholly reliable, study of Dr. Arnold. By virtue of the conditions and advantages of literary art it gets at things that are not found in other biographies. We can enjoy them if we remember that there is a good deal more to be said of the doughty doctor.

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## Davy Crockett in Love

DAVY CROCKETT

I HAD REMAINED for some short time at home with my father, when he informed me that he owed a man, whose name was Abraham Wilson, the sum of thirty-six dollars, and that if I would set in and work out the note, so as to lift it for him, he would discharge me from his service, and I might go free. I agreed to do this, and went immediately to the man who held my father's note, and contracted with him to work six months for it. I set in, and worked with all my might, not losing a single day in the six months. When my time was out, I got my father's note, and then declined working with the man any longer, though he wanted to hire me mighty bad. The reason was, it was a place where heaps of bad company met to drink and gamble, and I wanted to get away from them, for I know'd very well if I staid there, I should get a bad name, as nobody could be respectable that would live there. I therefore returned to my father, and gave him up his paper, which seemed to please him mightily, for though he was poor, he was an honest man, and always tried mighty hard to pay off his debts.

I next went to the house of an honest old Quaker, by the name of John Kennedy, who had removed from North Carolina, and proposed to hire myself to him, at two shillings a day. He agreed to take me a week on trial; at the end of which he

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appeared pleased with my work, and informed me that he held a note on my father for forty dollars, and that he would give me that note if I worked for him six months. I was certain enough that I should never get any part of the note; but then I remembered it was my father that owed it, and I concluded it was my duty as a child to help him along, and ease his lot as much as I could. I told the Quaker I would take him up at his offer, and immediately went to work. I never visited my father's house during the whole time of this engagement, though he lived only fifteen miles off. But when it was finished, and I had got the note, I borrowed one of my employer's horses, and, on a Sunday evening, went to pay my parents a visit. Some time after I got there, I pulled out the note and handed it to my father, who supposed Mr. Kennedy had sent it for collection. The old man looked mighty sorry, and said to me he had not the money to pay it, and didn't know what he should do. I then told him I had paid it for him, and it was then his own; that it was not presented for collection, but as a present from me. At this, he shed a heap of tears; and as soon as he got a little over it, he said he was sorry he couldn't give me any thing, but he was not able, he was too poor.

The next day, I went back to my old friend, the Quaker, and set in to work for him for some clothes; for I had now worked a year without getting any money at all, and my clothes were nearly all worn out, and what few I had left were mighty indifferent. I worked in this way for about two months; and in that time a young woman from North Carolina, who was the Quaker's niece, came on a visit to his house. And now I am just getting on a part of my history that I know I never can forget. For though I have heard people talk about hard loving, yet I reckon no poor devil in this world was ever cursed with such hard love as mine has always been, when it came on me. I soon found myself head over heels in love with this girl, whose name the public could make no use of; and I thought that if all the hills about there were pure chink, and all be-

longed to me, I would give them if I could just talk to her as I wanted to; but I was afraid to begin, for when I would think of saying any thing to her, my heart would begin to flutter like a duck in a puddle; and if I tried to outdo it and speak, would get right smack up in my throat, and choak me like a cold potatoe. It bore on my mind in this way, till at last I concluded I must die if I didn't broach the subject; and so I determined to begin and hang on a trying to speak, till my heart would get out of my throat one way or t'other. And so one day at it I went, and after several trials I could say a little. I told her how well I loved her; that she was the darling object of my soul and body; and I must have her, or else I should pine down to nothing, and just die away with the consumption.

I found my talk was not disagreeable to her; but she was an honest girl, and didn't want to deceive nobody. She told me she was engaged to her cousin, a son of the old Quaker. This news was worse to me than war, pestilence, or famine; but still I knowed I could not help myself. I saw quick enough my cake was dough, and I tried to cool off as fast as possible; but I had hardly safety pipes enough, as my love was so hot as mighty nigh to burst my boilers. But I didn't press my claims any more, seeing there was no chance to do any thing.

I began now to think, that all my misfortunes growed out of my want of learning. I had never been to school but four days, as the reader has already seen, and did not yet know a letter.

I thought I would try to go to school some; and as the Quaker had a married son, who was living about a mile and a half from him, and keeping a school, I proposed to him that I would go to school four days in the week, and work for him the other two, to pay my board and schooling. He agreed I might come on those terms; and so at it I went, learning and working back and forwards, until I had been with him nigh on to six months. In this time I learned to read a little in my primer, to write my own name, and to cypher some in the



three first rules in figures. And this was all the schooling I ever had in my life, up to this day. I should have continued longer, if it hadn't been that I concluded I couldn't do any longer without a wife; and so I cut out to hunt me one.

I found a family of very pretty little girls that I had known when very young. They had lived in the same neighbourhood with me, and I had thought very well of them. I made an offer to one of them, whose name is nobody's business, no more than the Quaker girl's was, and I found she took it very well. I still continued paying my respects to her, until I got to love her as bad as I had the Quaker's niece; and I would have agreed to fight a whole regiment of wildcats if she would only have said she would have me. Several months passed in this way, during all of which time she continued very kind and friendly. At last, the son of the old Quaker and my first girl had concluded to bring their matter to a close, and my own little queen and myself were called on to wait on them. We went on the day, and performed our duty as attendants. This made me worse than ever; and after it was over, I pressed my claim very hard on her, but she would still give me a sort of evasive answer. However, I gave her mighty little peace, till she told me at last she would have me. I thought this was glorification enough, even without spectacles. I was then about eighteen years old. We fixed the time to be married; and I thought if that day come, I should be the happiest man in the created world, or in the moon, or any where else.

I had by this time got to be mighty fond of the rifle, and had bought a capital one. I most generally carried her with me wherever I went, and though I had got back to the old Quaker's to live, who was a very particular man, I would sometimes slip out and attend the shooting matches, where they shot for beef; I always tried, though, to keep it a secret from him. He had at the same time a bound boy living with him, who I had gotten into almost as great a notion of the girls as myself. He was about my own age, and was deeply smitten with the sister

to my intended wife. I know'd it was in vain to try to get the leave of the old man for my young associate to go with me on any of my courting frolics; but I thought I could fix a plan to have him along, which would not injure the Quaker, as we had no notion that he should ever know it. We commonly slept up-stairs, and at the gable end of the house there was a window. So one Sunday, when the old man and his family were all gone to meeting, we went out and cut a long pole, and, taking it to the house, we set it up on one end in the corner, reaching up the chimney as high as the window. After this we would go up-stairs to bed, and then putting on our Sunday clothes, would go out at the window, and climb down the pole, take a horse apiece, and ride about ten miles to where his sweetheart lived, and the girl I claimed as my wife. I was always mighty careful to be back before day, so as to escape being found out; and in this way I continued my attentions very closely until a few days before I was to be married, or at least thought I was, for I had no fear that any thing was about to go wrong.

Just now I heard of a shooting match in the neighbourhood, right between where I lived and my girl's house; and I determined to kill two birds with one stone,—to go to the shooting match first, and then to see her. I therefore made the Quaker believe I was going to hunt for deer, as they were pretty plenty about in those parts; but, instead of hunting them, I went straight on to the shooting match, where I joined in with a partner, and we put in several shots for the beef. I was mighty lucky, and when the match was over I had won the whole beef. This was on a Saturday, and my success had put me in the finest humour in the world. So I sold my part of the beef for five dollars in the real grit, for I believe that was before bank-notes was invented; at least I had never heard of any. I now started on to ask for my wife; for, though the next Thursday was our wedding day, I had never said a word to her parents about it. I had always dreaded the undertaking so bad, that I had put the evil hour off as long as possible; and, indeed,

I calculated they knowed me so well, they wouldn't raise any objections to having me for their son-in-law. I had a great deal better opinion of myself, I found, than other people had of me; but I moved on with a light heart, and my five dollars jingling in my pocket, thinking all the time there was but few greater men in the world than myself.

In this flow of good humour I went ahead, till I got within about two miles of the place, when I concluded I would stop awhile at the house of the girl's uncle; where I might enquire about the family, and so forth, and so on. I was indeed just about ready to consider her uncle, my uncle; and her affairs, my affairs. When I went in, tho', I found her sister there. I asked how all was at home? In a minute I found from her countenance something was wrong. She looked mortified, and didn't answer as quick as I thought she ought, being it was her *brother-in-law* talking to her. However, I asked her again. She then burst into tears, and told me her sister was going to deceive me; and that she was to be married to another man the next day. This was as sudden to me as a clap of thunder of a bright sunshiny day. It was the capstone of all the afflictions I had ever met with; and it seemed to me, that it was more than any human creature could endure. It struck me perfectly speechless for some time, and made me feel so weak, that I thought I should sink down. I however recovered from my shock after a little, and rose and started without any ceremony, or even bidding any body good-bye. The young woman followed me out to the gate, and entreated me to go on to her father's, and said she would go with me. She said the young man, who was going to marry her sister, had got his license, and had asked for her; but she assured me her father and mother both preferred me to him; and that she had no doubt but that, if I would go on, I could break off the match. But I found I could go no further. My heart was bruised, and my spirits were broken down; so I bid her farewell, and turned my lonesome and miserable steps back again homeward, conclud-

ing that I was only born for hardships, misery, and disappointment. I now began to think, that in making me, it was entirely forgotten to make my mate: that I was born odd, and should always remain so, and that nobody would have me.

But all these reflections did not satisfy my mind, for I had no peace day nor night for several weeks. My appetite failed me, and I grew daily worse and worse. They all thought I was sick; and so I was. And it was the worse kind of sickness,—a sickness of the heart, and all the tender parts, produced by disappointed love.

I continued in this down-spirited situation for a good long time, until one day I took my rifle and started hunting. While out, I made a call at the house of a Dutch widow, who had a daughter that was well enough as to smartness, but she was as ugly as a stone fence. She was, however, quite talkative, and soon begun to laugh at me about my disappointment.

She seemed disposed, though, to comfort me as much as she could; and, for that purpose, told me to keep in good-heart, that "there was as good fish in the sea as had ever been caught out of it." I doubted this very much; but whether or not, I was certain that she was not one of them, for she was so homely that it almost give me a pain in the eyes to look at her.

But I couldn't help thinking, that she had intended what she had said as a banter for me to court her!!!—the last thing in creation I could have thought of doing. I felt little inclined to talk on the subject, it is true; but, to pass off the time, I told her I thought I was born odd, and that no fellow to me could be found. She protested against this, and said if I would come to their reaping, which was not far off, she would show me one of the prettiest little girls there I had ever seen. She added that the one who had deceived me was nothing to be compared with her. I didn't believe a word of all this, for I had thought that such a piece of flesh and blood as she was had never been manufactured, and never would again. I agreed with her, though,

that the little varment had treated me so bad, that I ought to forget her, and yet I couldn't do it. I concluded the best way to accomplish it was to cut out again, and see if I could find any other that would answer me; and so I told the Dutch girl I would be at the reaping, and would bring as many as I could with me.

I employed my time pretty generally in giving information of it, as far as I could, until the day came; and I then offered to work for my old friend, the Quaker, two days, if he would let his bound boy go with me one to the reaping. He refused, and reproved me pretty considerable roughly for my proposition; and said, if he was in my place he wouldn't go; that there would be a great deal of bad company there; and that I had been so good a boy, he would be sorry for me to get a bad name. But I knowed my promise to the Dutch girl, and I was resolved to fulfil it; so I shouldered my rifle, and started by myself. When I got to the place, I found a large company of men and women, and among them an old Irish woman, who had a great deal to say. I soon found out from my Dutch girl, that this old lady was the mother of the little girl she had promised me, though I had not yet seen her. She was in an outhouse with some other youngsters, and had not yet made her appearance. Her mamma, however, was no way bashful. She came up to me, and began to praise my red cheeks, and said she had a sweetheart for me. I had no doubt she had been told what I come for, and all about it. In the evening I was introduced to her daughter, and I must confess, I was plaguy well pleased with her from the word go. She had a good countenance, and was very pretty, and I was full bent on making up an acquaintance with her.

It was not long before the dancing commenced, and I asked her to join me in a reel. She very readily consented to do so; and after we had finished our dance, I took a seat alongside of her, and entered into a talk. I found her very interesting; while I was setting by her, making as good a use of my time as

I could, her mother came to us, and very jocularly called me her son-in-law. This rather confused me, but I looked on it as a joke of the old lady, and tried to turn it off as well as I could; but I took care to pay as much attention to her through the evening as I could. I went on the old saying, of salting the cow to catch the calf. I soon become so much pleased with this little girl, that I began to think the Dutch girl had told me the truth, when she said there was still good fish in the sea.

We continued our frolic till near day, when we joined in some plays, calculated to amuse youngsters. I had not often spent a more agreeable night. In the morning, however, we all had to part; and I found my mind had become much better reconciled than it had been for a long time. I went home to the Quaker's, and made a bargain to work with his son for a low-priced horse. He was the first one I had ever owned, and I was to work six months for him. I had been engaged very closely five or six weeks, when this little girl run in my mind so, that I concluded I must go and see her, and find out what sort of people they were at home. I mounted my horse and away I went to where she lived, and when I got there I found her father a very clever old man, and the old woman as talkative as ever. She wanted badly to find out all about me, and as I thought to see how I would do for her girl. I had not yet seen her about, and I began to feel some anxiety to know where she was.

In a short time, however, my impatience was relieved, as she arrived at home from a meeting to which she had been. There was a young man with her, who I soon found was disposed to set up claim to her, as he was so attentive to her that I could hardly get to slip in a word edgeways. I began to think I was barking up the wrong tree again; but I was determined to stand up to my rack, fodder or no fodder. And so, to know her mind a little on the subject, I began to talk about starting, as I knowed she would then show some sign, from which I could understand which way the wind blowed. It was then

near night, and my distance was fifteen miles home. At this my little girl soon began to indicate to the other gentleman that his room would be the better part of his company. At length she left him, and came to me, and insisted mightily hard that I should not go that evening; and, indeed, from all her actions and the attempts she made to get rid of him, I saw that she preferred me all holler. But it wasn't long before I found trouble enough in another quarter. Her mother was deeply enlisted for my rival, and I had to fight against her influence as well as his. But the girl herself was the prize I was fighting for; and as she welcomed me, I was determined to lay siege to her, let what would happen. I commenced a close courtship, having cornered her from her old beau; while he set off, looking on, like a poor man at a country frolic, and all the time almost gritting his teeth with pure disappointment. But he didn't dare to attempt any thing more, for now I had gotten a start, and I looked at him every once in a while as fierce as a wild-cat. I staid with her until Monday morning, and then I put out for home.

It was about two weeks after this that I was sent for to engage in a wolf hunt, where a great number of men were to meet, with their dogs and guns, and where the best sort of sport was expected. I went as large as life, but I had to hunt in strange woods, and in a part of the country which was very thinly inhabited. While I was out it clouded up, and I began to get scared; and in a little while I was so much so, that I didn't know which way home was, nor any thing about it. I set out the way I thought it was, but it turned out with me, as it always does with a lost man, I was wrong, and took exactly the contrary direction from the right one. And for the information of young hunters, I will just say, in this place, that whenever a fellow gets bad lost, the way home is just the way he don't think it is. This rule will hit nine times out of ten. I went ahead, though, about six or seven miles, when I found night was coming on fast; but at this distressing time I saw

a little woman streaking it along through the woods like all wrath, and so I cut on too, for I was determined I wouldn't lose sight of her that night any more. I run on till she saw me, and she stopped; for she was as glad to see me as I was to see her, as she was lost as well as me. When I came up to her, who should she be but my little girl, that I had been paying my respects to. She had been out hunting her father's horses, and had missed her way, and had no knowledge where she was, or how far it was to any house, or what way would take us there. She had been travelling all day, and was mighty tired; and I would have taken her up, and toated her, if it hadn't been that I wanted her just where I could see her all the time, for I thought she looked sweeter than sugar; and by this time I loved her almost well enough to eat her.

At last I came to a path, that I know'd must go somewhere, and so we followed it, till we came to a house, at about dark. Here we staid all night. I set up all night courting; and in the morning we parted. She went to her home, from which we were distant about seven miles, and I to mine, which was ten miles off.

I now turned in to work again; and it was about four weeks before I went back to see her. I continued to go occasionally, until I had worked long enough to pay for my horse, by putting in my gun with my work, to the man I had purchased from; and then I began to count whether I was to be deceived again or not. At our next meeting we set the day for our wedding; and I went to my father's, and made arrangements for an infair, and returned to ask her parents for her. When I got there, the old lady appeared to be mighty wrath; and when I broached the subject, she looked at me as savage as a meat axe. The old man appeared quite willing, and treated me very clever. But I hadn't been there long, before the old woman as good as ordered me out of her house. I thought I would put her in mind of old times, and see how that would go with her. I told her she had called me her son-in-law before I had at-



tempted to call her my mother-in-law, and I thought she ought to cool off. But her Irish was up too high to do any thing with her, and so I quit trying. All I cared for was, to have her daughter on my side, which I knowed was the case then; but how soon some other fellow might knock my nose out of joint again, I couldn't tell. I however felt rather insulted at the old lady, and I thought I wouldn't get married in her house. And so I told her girl, that I would come the next Thursday, and bring a horse, a bridle, and saddle for her, and she must be ready to go. Her mother declared I shouldn't have her; but I know'd I should, if somebody else didn't get her before Thursday. I then started, bidding them good-day, and went by the house of a justice of the peace, who lived on the way to my father's, and made a bargain with him to marry me.

When Thursday came, all necessary arrangements were made at my father's to receive my wife; and so I took my eldest brother and his wife, and another brother, and a single sister that I had, and two other young men with me, and cut out to her father's house to get her. We went on, until we got within two miles of the place, where we met a large company that had heard of the wedding, and were waiting. Some of that company went on with my brother and sister, and the young man I had picked out to wait on me. When they got there, they found the old lady as wrathful as ever. However the old man filled their bottle, and the young men returned in a hurry. I then went on with my company, and when I arrived I never pretended to dismount from my horse, but rode up to the door, and asked the girl if she was ready; and she said she was. I then told her to light on the horse I was leading; and she did so. Her father, though, had gone out to the gate, and when I started he commenced persuading me to stay and marry there; that he was entirely willing to the match, and that his wife, like most women, had entirely too much tongue; but that I oughtn't to mind her. I told him if she would ask me to stay and marry at her house, I would do so. With that he sent for her, and

after they had talked for some time out by themselves, she came to me and looked at me mighty good, and asked my pardon for what she had said, and invited me stay. She said it was the first child she had ever had to marry; and she couldn't bear to see her go off in that way; that if I would light, she would do the best she could for us. I couldn't stand every thing, and so I agreed, and we got down, and went in. I sent off then for my parson, and got married in a short time; for I was afraid to wait long, for fear of another defeat. We had as good treatment as could be expected; and that night all went on well. The next day we cut out for my father's, where we met a large company of people, that had been waiting a day and a night for our arrival. We passed the time quite merrily, until the company broke up; and having gotten my wife, I thought I was completely made up, and needed nothing more in the whole world. But I soon found this was all a mistake—for now having a wife, I wanted every thing else; and, worse than all, I had nothing to give for it.

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## Trooper Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke

E. M. FORSTER

THE WORKHOUSE at Henley-on-Thames has, or rather had, a garden attached to it, in the midst of which stood a solitary hut, reserved for inmates who were suffering from infectious diseases. At the moment our eyes rest upon this hut—that is to say at a moment during the February of 1794—it was occupied by two troopers of the King's Light Dragoons. One of them was sick of the confluent smallpox; he raved in delirium, and the other, who held him down, was covered with ominous spots. The unfortunate men had been left behind by their regiment to look after themselves as best they could, and their situation was appalling, for the weather was bitter, the hut possessed four windows and little else, and though the paupers in the main building were sympathetic they approached with circumspection. We do not know the name of the trooper who had the smallpox, but the one covered with spots was called Comberbacke.

Comberbacke was a clumsy young man, with a drooping lower lip and aspiring eyes, and somewhat of a puzzle to his mates. They saw easily enough that he was a "natural" but he was a talking natural, a rare and rather agreeable species; he could speak and even write upon a variety of topics with a flu-

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ency they felt bound to admire. Although he could neither mount his horse nor groom it, he was grand when he came to the wars of the past, and he was always willing to describe them in an interminable and interesting way. There was an expedition entailing the Hellespont—probably the mouth of the Thames being a broad space of water—leading to Thermopple (*sic*) a place up north, and General Alexander—no doubt from Truro, where it is a well-known name. He talked and laughed, didn't mind being teased, changed from subject to subject; he was superb; nothing could stop him when once he had started, and if asked to write a letter for you it was the same: the ink poured out in a torrent, so that by the time she had got to the fourth page the girl couldn't do otherwise than give in. Thus he gained a curious reputation, where even his imbecilities were admired. For instance, "Whose rusty gun is this?" the inspecting officer would ask. "Is it *very* rusty?" replied Comberbacke, "because if it is I think it must be mine." What a reply! But how successful! For the inspecting officer was dumbfounded. And again, Comberbacke's idea that a horse ought to "rub himself down and so shine in all his native beauty"—well, it was the idea of a zany, still when the letter was written and the girl on the way there or back there was no reason you shouldn't brighten his horse up for him; it didn't take long, and you knew which end kicked and which bit, more than he did. At last he proved so incompetent that his horse was withdrawn from beneath him permanently, and he was employed upon matters relating to sanitation; that was why he was in the garden-hut now. When his comrade's delirium lessened, he procured pen and ink and wrote the following letter:

My assumed name is Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke, 15th or King's Regiment of Light Dragoons, G. Troop. My number I do not know. It is of no import. The bounty I received was six guineas and a half: but a light horse man's bounty is a mere lure: it is expended for him in things which he must have

had without a bounty—gaiters, a pair of leather breeches, stable jacket, and shell; horse-cloth, surcingle, watering bridle, brushes and the long etc. of military accoutrement. I enlisted the 2nd of December 1793, was attested and sworn the 4th. I am at present nurse to a sick man, and shall, I believe, stay at Henley another week. There will be a large draught from our regiment to complete our troops abroad. The men were picked out today. I suppose I am not one, being a very indocile equestrian. Farewell.

Love, extravagance, and a too reckless support of Unitarianism had combined to put him in this plight. A clergyman's son, he had been sent by his brothers up to Cambridge, where he had successfully composed a Latin declaration on Posthumous Fame, and a poem entitled *To a Young Ass*, and seemed to be settling down. Then he ran away and enlisted. He was always like that. He would start suddenly and collapse suddenly, and he was about to collapse now. The hut, his mate's illness, his own eruptive spots, were going to be too much for him, and to induce in him his favourite reaction—a sense of guilt. For the moment he played the man, and a beautiful girl even ventured into the garden and flirted with him from a distance. Though he mourned for a lost girl of his own, he was touched, and in after years he thought of writing a poem called *The Soother in Absence* to commemorate the visitor, but like so much else that he planned this was never accomplished. He seldom did what he or what others hoped, and posterity has marked him as her prey in consequence. She has never ceased to hold up her plump finger to him, and shake it and say that he has disappointed her. And he has acquiesced because he is a darling. But if one turns on posterity and says, "Well! what else do you want him to do? Would you rather have Comberbacke as he is or not at all?" she is apt to be silent or to change the conversation.

His Cambridge career included typical irregularities. "We have veal, sir, tottering on the verge of beef," he had shouted

out in Hall upon one occasion; and on another, when the Master of his college met him and said, "When will you get rid of that shameful gown?" he had retorted, "Why, sir, I think I have got rid of the best part of it already." More serious was the unholy row in the Senate House on the occasion of the expulsion of a Mr. Frend for his Unitarian principles. The undergraduates sympathized with Mr. Frend, because they associated him with revolutionary ideas and they attended in great numbers to applaud his defence. Comberbacke clapped with the rest, and when the Proctor approached him he deftly exchanged places with a man who had scarcely any arms. "Sir, you were applauding," said the Proctor; the man retorted, "Would that I could," showing his stumps. And there were drinking parties. Nothing very much, but on to it all fell a love-disappointment: his affection for the sister of an old school-fellow was not returned. So one night he crossed the court from his rooms to the entrance gate, passed down the long paved passage called "the chimney," gained the street and entered the world. It was not his first escapade. At the age of seven he had nearly killed his brother Frank in a quarrel over some toasted cheese; then, stricken with remorse, he had rushed into the twilight and had watched the river and some calves on the further side of it, and so poignant had been the misery that in later years a chance sound would invoke the whole scene: "There would come on my mind that night I slept out at Ottery and the calf across the river whose lowing so deeply impressed me. Chill and child and calf and lowing." And he was to have other escapades in the future: there was another journey—alas! someone interrupted it—along the course of an underground river, and there was a voyage—perhaps the most marvellous any navigator has ever undertaken—into the Antarctic seas.

He went by coach from Cambridge to London, got off at Holborn, bought a ticket for the Irish Lottery (not yet illegal), composed a poem on it beginning—

Promptress of unnumber'd sighs,  
O snatch that circling bandage from thine eyes.

—sent the poem to the *Morning Chronicle*, went to the King's mews, and enlisted.

An old schoolfellow was the first to find out what had happened; then it got round to the family; and as soon as his brothers started writing to him he fell to pieces. He rushed at once from heroics to morbidity ("Mine is a sensibility gangrened with inward corruption"), to mawkishness ("Alas, my poor mother!"—whom he did not like), to self-abasement ("Oh, my wayward soul! I have been a fool even to madness!"), to solemn fudge ("In a mind which vice has not utterly divested of sensibility, few occurrences can inflict a more acute pang than the receiving proofs of tenderness and love where only resentment and reproach were expected and deserved"), and finally to a deprecating and uneasy gaiety. But his troubles were not at an end. He had to be got out of the Dragoons, and it proved to be less easy than getting in; and he had to be got back into Cambridge, if Cambridge would receive him.

His brothers, one of whom held a commission, got in touch with the War Office, and, so far as we know, it is through this channel that he was released. But he never was very truthful, and in after years he used to tell dramatic tales. They centre round one of his own officers, a Captain Ogle. According to one of these tales, he was standing sentry outside a ballroom when Captain Ogle, who was passing in with another officer, quoted two lines in Greek, and ascribed them to Euripides. "I hope your honour will excuse me," said Trooper Comberbacke, "but the lines you have repeated are not quite accurately cited; moreover, instead of being in Euripides they will be found in the second antistrophe of the *Oedipus* of Sophocles." In another version, it is through Latin that he attracts the Captain's attention; he wrote up some pathetic lines in the stable where he had failed to groom his horse. At this point Miss Mitford, authoress of *Our Village*, takes up the thread. Captain Ogle's

father and Miss Mitford's father were friends. They were at dinner at Reading and Captain Ogle was with them. To amuse them he told them of the scholar-trooper, and his yearnings for release, but, says Miss Mitford, "kind and clever as Captain Ogle was, he was so indolent a man that without a flapper the matter might have slept in his hands till the Greek Kalends." The company exerted themselves. The difficulty was to find a substitute, for troopers were scarce. One of the servants who was waiting at the table was called, and agreed to serve for a suitable honorarium. The matter was fixed up there and then, and so grateful was Comberbacke that in after years he looked through two of Miss Mitford's works, entitled *Christina* and *Blanch*, and gave her good advice, which was, however, of no use to her, she feared.

As release approached, he became more and more school-boyish and hysterical. He was afraid of annoying his brothers further, particularly George the clergyman, and now asks advice on every detail. Should he, or should he not, order new clothes?

They are gone irrevocably. My shirts, which I have with me, are, all but one, worn to rags, mere rags; their texture was ill adapted to the labour of the stables. . . . I have ordered therefore a pair of breeches, which will be nineteen shillings, a waistcoat at twelve shillings, a pair of shoes at seven shillings and four pence. Besides these I must have a hat. Have I done wrong in ordering these things? I have so seldom acted right that in every step I take of my own accord I tremble lest I should be wrong. I forgot in the above account to mention a flannel waistcoat; it will be six shillings. The military dress is almost oppressively warm, and so very ill as I am at present I think it imprudent to hazard cold.

Besides the clothes, there is a terrible confession about some books; he sold books that were worth forty shillings for fourteen; he will do all he can to buy them back. Moreover, should he write a contrite letter to Dr. Pearce, the master of his Col-



lege, imploring to be taken back, or would it show truer humility if he remained dumb? His brothers seem to have behaved decently—it cost them at least forty guineas to buy his discharge; and the college authorities were sympathetic and made no difficulties in receiving him. Some censure had to be administered, and, consequently, the Register of Jesus, Cambridge, contains the famous entry: “1794 Apr: Coleridge admonitus est per magistrum in praesentia sociorum.” And now you know who Comberbacke is if you did not know it before.

As soon as Comberbacke felt himself Coleridge again, he began to perk up. He had really been treated most leniently, but “Dr. Pearce behaved with great asperity,” he complains, and has confined him to college for a month and ordered him to translate the works of Demetrius Phalereus. “All the fellows tried to persuade the Master to leniency, but in vain.” Then he turns cheeky: “Without the least affectation, I applaud his conduct and think nothing of it. The confinement is nothing. I have the field and grove of the College to walk in, and what can I wish more? What do I wish more? Nothing. The Demetrius is dry.” He gets up at 5.0 A.M.; he has dropped all his old acquaintances; he is finishing a Greek Ode; really, his brother need not worry about him any more.

The rooms he occupied at Jesus’ are still to be seen. They are in the front court, on the ground floor—charming rooms—and Malthus, if one seeks for a contrast, once occupied the rooms opposite. It is natural to assume that after his military career he would settle quietly down. But it is dangerous to assume anything about Coleridge. If life is a lesson, he never learnt it. He did not settle down to his Demetrius, he did not proceed to his degree, and in the autumn of that same year the College register contains a second Latin entry, to the effect that Coleridge went away and did not return.

He had disgraced himself irretrievably, and three years later he wrote *The Ancient Mariner*.

## 2. HISTORY THAT IS LITERATURE

### *The Treachery of Pontiac*

FRANCIS PARKMAN

ON THE AFTERNOON of the fifth of May, [1763,] a Canadian woman, the wife of St. Aubin, one of the principal settlers, crossed over from the western side [of the Detroit River], and visited the Ottawa village, to obtain from the Indians a supply of maple sugar and venison. She was surprised at finding several of the warriors engaged in filing off the muzzles of their guns, so as to reduce them, stock and all, to the length of about a yard. Returning home in the evening, she mentioned what she had seen to several of her neighbors. Upon this, one of them, the blacksmith of the village, remarked that many of the Indians had lately visited his shop, and attempted to borrow files and saws for a purpose which they would not explain.<sup>1</sup> These circumstances excited the suspicion of the experienced Canadians. Doubtless there were many in the settlement who might, had they chosen, have revealed the plot; but it is no less certain that the more numerous and respectable class in the little community had too deep an interest in the preservation of peace, to countenance the designs of Pontiac. M. Gouin, an old and wealthy settler, went to the commandant, and conjured him to stand upon his guard; but Gladwyn,

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From *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, by Francis Parkman. By permission of Little, Brown & Co.

<sup>1</sup> *St. Aubin's Account*, MS.

[the commanding officer at Fort Detroit and] a man of fearless temper, gave no heed to the friendly advice.<sup>2</sup>

In the Pottawattamie village, if there be truth in tradition, lived an Ojibwa girl, who could boast a larger share of beauty than is common in the wigwam. She had attracted the eye of Gladwyn. He had formed a connection with her, and she had become much attached to him. On the afternoon of the sixth, Catharine—for so the officers called her—came to the fort, and repaired to Gladwyn's quarters, bringing with her a pair of elk-skin moccasins, ornamented with porcupine work, which he had requested her to make. There was something unusual in her look and manner. Her face was sad and downcast. She said little, and soon left the room; but the sentinel at the door saw her still lingering at the street corner, though the hour for closing the gates was nearly come. At length she attracted the notice of Gladwyn himself; and calling her to him, he pressed her to declare what was weighing upon her mind. Still she remained for a long time silent, and it was only after much urgency and many promises not to betray her, that she revealed her momentous secret.

To-morrow, she said, Pontiac will come to the fort with sixty of his chiefs. Each will be armed with a gun, cut short, and hidden under his blanket. Pontiac will demand to hold a council; and after he has delivered his speech, he will offer a peace-belt of wampum, holding it in a reversed position. This will be the signal of attack. The chiefs will spring up and fire upon the officers, and the Indians in the street will fall upon the garrison. Every Englishman will be killed, but not the scalp of a single Frenchman will be touched.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Gouin's Account*, MS.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to the writer from H R Schoolcraft, Esq., containing the traditional account from the lips of the interpreter, Henry Conner. See, also, Carver, *Travels*, 155 (Lond. 1778).

Carver's account of the conspiracy and the siege is in several points inexact, which throws a shade of doubt on this story. Tradition, however, as related by the interpreter Conner, sustains him; with the addi-

Such is the story told in 1768 to the traveller Carver at Detroit, and preserved in local tradition, but not sustained by contemporary letters or diaries. What is certain is, that Gladwyn received secret information, on the night of the sixth of May, that an attempt would be made on the morrow to capture the fort by treachery. He called some of his officers, and told them what he had heard. The defences of the place were

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tion that Catharine was the mistress of Gladwyn, and a few other points, including a very unromantic end of the heroine, who is said to have perished, by falling, when drunk, into a kettle of boiling maple-sap. This was many years after. Maxwell agrees in the main with Carver. There is another tradition, that the plot was disclosed by an old squaw. A third, current among the Ottawas, and sent to me in 1858 by Mr. Hosmer, of Toledo, declares that a young squaw told the plot to the commanding officer, but that he would not believe her, as she had a bad name, being a "straggler among the private soldiers." An Indian chief, pursues the same story, afterwards warned the officer. The Pontiac MS says that Gladwyn was warned by an Ottawa warrior, though a woman was suspected by the Indians of having betrayed the secret. Peltier says that a woman named Catharine was accused of revealing the plot, and severely flogged by Pontiac in consequence. There is another story, that a soldier named Tucker, adopted by the Indians, was warned by his Indian sister. But the most distinct and satisfactory evidence is the following, from a letter written at Detroit on the twelfth of July, 1763, and signed James Macdonald. It is among the *Haldimand Papers* in the British Museum. There is also an imperfect copy, found among the papers of Colonel John Brodhead, in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: "About six o'clock that afternoon [May 7], six of their warriors returned and brought an old squaw prisoner, alleging that she had given us false information against them. The major declared she had never given us any kind of advice. They then insisted on naming the author of what he had heard with regard to the Indians, which he declined to do, but told them that it was one of themselves, whose name he promised never to reveal; whereupon they went off, and carried the old woman prisoner with them. When they arrived at their camp, Pontiac, their greatest chief, seized on the prisoner, and gave her three strokes with a stick on the head, which laid her flat on the ground, and the whole nation assembled round her, and called repeated times, 'Kill her! kill her!'"

Thus it is clear that the story told by Carver must be taken with many grains of allowance. The greater part of the evidence given above has been gathered since the first edition of this book was published. It has been thought best to retain the original passage, with the necessary qualifications. The story is not without interest, and those may believe it who will.

feeble and extensive, and the garrison by far too weak to repel a general assault. The force of the Indians at this time is variously estimated at from six hundred to two thousand; and the commandant greatly feared that some wild impulse might precipitate their plan, and that they would storm the fort before the morning. Every preparation was made to meet the sudden emergency. Half the garrison were ordered under arms, and all the officers prepared to spend the night upon the ramparts.

The day closed, and the hues of sunset faded. Only a dusky redness lingered in the west, and the darkening earth seemed her dull self again. Then night descended, heavy and black, on the fierce Indians and the sleepless English. From sunset till dawn, an anxious watch was kept from the slender palisades of Detroit. The soldiers were still ignorant of the danger; and the sentinels did not know why their numbers were doubled, or why, with such unwonted vigilance, their officers repeatedly visited their posts. Again and again Gladwyn mounted his wooden ramparts, and looked forth into the gloom. There seemed nothing but repose and peace in the soft, moist air of the warm spring evening, with the piping of frogs along the river bank, just roused from their torpor by the genial influence of May. But, at intervals, as the night wind swept across the bastion, it bore sounds of fearful portent to the ear, the sullen booming of the Indian drum and the wild chorus of quavering yells, as the warriors, around their distant camp-fires, danced the war dance, in preparation for the morrow's work. . . . <sup>4</sup>

The night passed without alarm. The sun rose upon fresh fields and newly budding woods, and scarcely had the morning mists dissolved, when the garrison could see a fleet of birch canoes crossing the river from the eastern shore, within range

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<sup>4</sup> *Maxwell's Account*, MS

of cannon shot above the fort. Only two or three warriors appeared in each, but all moved slowly, and seemed deeply laden. In truth, they were full of savages, lying flat on their faces, that their numbers might not excite the suspicion of the English.<sup>5</sup>

At an early hour the open common behind the fort was thronged with squaws, children, and warriors, some naked, and others fantastically arrayed in their barbarous finery. All seemed restless and uneasy, moving hither and thither, in apparent preparation for a general game of ball. Many tall warriors, wrapped in their blankets, were seen stalking towards the fort, and casting malignant furtive glances upward at the palisades. Then with an air of assumed indifference, they would move towards the gate. They were all admitted; for Gladwyn, who, in this instance at least, showed some knowledge of Indian character, chose to convince his crafty foe that, though their plot was detected, their hostility was despised.<sup>6</sup>

The whole garrison was ordered under arms. Sterling, and the other English fur-traders, closed their storehouses and armed their men, and all in cool confidence stood waiting the result.

Meanwhile, Pontiac, who had crossed with the canoes from the eastern shore, was approaching along the river road, at the head of his sixty chiefs, all gravely marching in Indian file. A Canadian settler, named Beaufait, had been that morning to the fort. He was now returning homewards, and as he reached the bridge which led over the stream then called Parent's Creek, he saw the chiefs in the act of crossing from the farther bank. He stood aside to give them room. As the last Indian passed, Beaufait recognized him as an old friend and associate. The savage greeted him with the usual ejaculation, opened for an instant the folds of his blanket, disclosed the hid-

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<sup>5</sup> *Meloche's Account*, MS.

<sup>6</sup> *Penn. Gaz.* No. 1808.

den gun, and, with an emphatic gesture towards the fort, indicated the purpose to which he meant to apply it.<sup>7</sup>

At ten o'clock, the great war-chief, with his treacherous followers, reached the fort, and the gateway was thronged with their savage faces. All were wrapped to the throat in colored blankets. Some were crested with hawk, eagle, or raven plumes; others had shaved their heads, leaving only the fluttering scalp-lock on the crown; while others, again, wore their long, black hair flowing loosely at their backs, or wildly hanging about their brows like a lion's mane. Their bold yet crafty features, their cheeks besmeared with ochre and vermilion, white lead and soot, their keen, deep-set eyes gleaming in their sockets, like those of rattlesnakes, gave them an aspect grim, uncouth, and horrible. For the most part, they were tall, strong men, and all had a gait and bearing of peculiar stateliness.

As Pontiac entered, it is said that he started, and that a deep ejaculation half escaped from his breast. Well might his stoicism fail, for at a glance he read the ruin of his plot. On either hand, within the gateway, stood ranks of soldiers and hedges of glittering steel. The swarthy *engagés* of the fur-traders, armed to the teeth, stood in groups at the street corners, and the measured tap of a drum fell ominously on the ear. Soon regaining his composure, Pontiac strode forward into the narrow street; and his chiefs filed after him in silence, while the scared faces of women and children looked out from the windows as they passed. Their rigid muscles betrayed no sign of emotion; yet, looking closely, one might have seen their small eyes glance from side to side with restless scrutiny.

Traversing the entire width of the little town, they reached the door of the council-house, a large building standing near the margin of the river. On entering, they saw Gladwyn, with several of his officers, seated in readiness to receive them, and the observant chiefs did not fail to remark that every English-

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<sup>7</sup> This incident was related, by the son of Beaufait, to General Cass. See Cass, *Discourse before the Michigan Historical Society*, 30.

man wore a sword at his side, and a pair of pistols in his belt. The conspirators eyed each other with uneasy glances. "Why," demanded Pontiac, "do I see so many of my father's young men standing in the street with their guns?" Gladwyn replied through his interpreter, La Butte, that he had ordered the soldiers under arms for the sake of exercise and discipline. With much delay and many signs of distrust, the chiefs at length sat down on the mats prepared for them; and, after the customary pause, Pontiac rose to speak. Holding in his hand the wampum belt which was to have given the fatal signal, he addressed the commandant, professing strong attachment to the English, and declaring, in Indian phrase, that he had come to smoke the pipe of peace, and brighten the chain of friendship. The officers watched him keenly as he uttered these hollow words, fearing lest, though conscious that his designs were suspected, he might still attempt to accomplish them. And once, it is said, he raised the wampum belt as if about to give the signal of attack. But at that instant Gladwyn signed slightly with his hand. The sudden clash of arms sounded from the passage without, and a drum rolling the charge filled the council-room with its stunning din. At this, Pontiac stood like one confounded. Some writers will have it, that Gladwyn, rising from his seat, drew the chief's blanket aside, exposed the hidden gun, and sternly rebuked him for his treachery. But the commandant wished only to prevent the consummation of the plot, without bringing on an open rupture. His own letters affirm that he and his officers remained seated as before. Pontiac, seeing his unruffled brow and his calm eye fixed steadfastly upon him, knew not what to think, and soon sat down in amazement and perplexity. Another pause ensued, and Gladwyn commenced a brief reply. He assured the chiefs that friendship and protection should be extended towards them as long as they continued to deserve it, but threatened ample vengeance for the first act of aggression. The council then broke up; but, before leaving the room, Pontiac told the officers that he



would return in a few days, with his squaws and children, for he wished that they should all shake hands with their fathers the English. To this new piece of treachery Gladwyn deigned no reply. The gates of the fort, which had been closed during the conference, were again flung open, and the baffled savages were suffered to depart, rejoiced, no doubt, to breathe once more the free air of the open fields.<sup>8</sup>

#### COMMENT

In the middle years of the nineteenth century, writing histories was often no more than a matter of getting dates in the proper order and deciding which of several spellings of a name was most likely to be the correct one. The results were informative—and usually very dull. But there were three writers who took a different view of their work. History, they believed, could and should be as full of vitality and concreteness as any novel or epic poem. As a result, not many tales are more exciting to read than Thomas

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<sup>8</sup> Carver, *Travels*, 159 (London, 1778). M'Kenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 130. Cass, *Discourse*, 32. Penn. Gaz. Nos. 1807, 1808. Pontiac MS. M'Dougal, MSS. Gouin's *Account*, MS. Meloche's *Account*, MS. St. Aubin's *Account*, MS.

Extract from a MS. Letter—Major Gladwyn to Sir J. Amherst:

"Detroit, May 14, 1763.

"Sir:

"On the First Instant, Pontiac, the Chief of the Ottawa Nation, came here with about Fifty of his Men (forty, Pontiac MS.), and told me that in a few days, when the rest of his Nation came in, he Intended to Pay me a Formal Visit. The 7th he came, but I was luckily Informed, the Night before, that he was coming with an Intention to Surprise Us; Upon which I took such Precautions that when they Entered the Fort, tho' they were, by the best Accounts, about Three Hundred, and Armed with Knives, Tomvawks, and a great many with Guns cut short, and hid under their Blankets, they were so much surprized to see our Disposition, that they would scarcely sit down to Council: However in about Half an hour, after they saw their Designs were Discovered, they sat Down and Pontiac made a speech which I Answered calmly, without Intimating my suspicion of their Intentions, and after receiving some Trifling Presents, they went away to their Camp."

Carlyle's *The French Revolution*, parts of Thomas Babington Macaulay's *History of England from the Accession of James II*, and Francis Parkman's *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, from which this selection was taken. All three works are truly literature. All enjoy the advantages of the subtler expressiveness and deeper penetration of art. And, like biography, all three somewhat distort the surface appearance of reality in order to give us a truer vision of their subjects.

We do not know just what drove Parkman to write so far above the dead level of fact that suited so many of his colleagues, but we do know some of the elements in his experience and temperament which must have been significant. For one thing, as a young man he had lived and traveled among the kind of people about whom he wrote and could go directly to life for much of his material. When he turned to other writers for materials, as he often did, for he was tireless in his research among original documents, he could fill out the most limited texts with authentic details from his own experience. His love of adventure and the outdoors, to which so many episodes of his boyhood and young manhood testify, made him impatient with the usual bloodless abstractions of conventional history: he wanted the full, rich body of the world he had known and loved. His desire made him insist that the historian must "im-bue himself with the life and spirit of the time." Furthermore, he had remarkable powers of visualizing people and events, and these powers were encouraged by his partial blindness (even as Milton's blindness urged him on to extraordinarily vivid descriptions). No doubt there were many other causes. What they were is not as important as their result: Parkman conceived his work on a huge scale but executed it in terms of real men struggling with each other and the wilderness.

In giving shape to the confusing richness and variety of his material, Parkman tended to organize his work into a series of dramatic episodes which give it a simple but artistically pleasing design and satisfied his love of excitement and colorful backgrounds. As a result, he provides us with shrewd and convincing studies of individuals, their conduct, and their motives, which are comparable to the studies in fiction. Within his episodes the details are carefully chosen and arranged to give us the sense of being very much in

the middle of things. Little, seemingly offhand touches combine to evoke a remarkably complete feeling of the whole context through their realism, their strong appeal to the imagination, and their symbolic suggestiveness. It would be hard to improve on the effectiveness of the account of the sixty chieftains in all their barbaric paints, feathers, and furs walking slowly between the lines of soldiers. Like a novelist or playwright, Parkman saw in that incident what was most dramatic and revealing: the drumtaps measuring against the silence the moments of suspense; the frightened women and children peeping out; the flickering eyes of the otherwise impassive Indians, counting the rifles and bayonets and seeing the defeat of their plot. Apparently inconsequential (for what, we might carelessly ask, is the historical importance of the drumtaps and the frightened children?), these details recreate for us the excitement and terror of the moment and can almost serve as symbols for the whole struggle between not only Gladwyn and Pontiac but the ways of life of the men of the forts and the men of the forest, so well do they suggest the differences that lay at the root of the conflict.

Throughout the episode each little detail plays upon the imagination and takes its place in the unified design. The sunset colors of dusky red and heavy blackness help to create an atmosphere of anxiety and foreboding, for they suggest violence and death both by themselves and in contrast with each other. This atmosphere is intensified as these colors blend into the conflicting colors of the Indians' campfires and the blinding darkness at the ramparts. There is conflict, too, in the ironic difference between the uneasiness of Gladwyn and his officers on the ramparts and the torpid warmth of the May night full of the sounds of spring. (May nights are for music on the wind and dancing, but for this night the music is of war drums and the dancing is a preparation for death.) In this atmosphere the drumtaps sound more ominous as the chieftains march to the council, the fright of the women and children is not frivolous but deep and terrible, and the crashing roll when Gladwyn raises his hand startles us a little as it must have startled Pontiac.

The writing shows a high degree of aesthetic interest in its appropriateness, consistency, tension, and integration. This is fine but

far from perfect art. Parkman had a coarseness of imagination that made him run too much after novelties such as the melodramatic story of Gladwyn's Indian mistress as the source of information about the plot. Even though he knows the story is unreliable as history and makes indirect apologies and disclaimers, he seems determined to have it when really there is nothing in his version to distinguish it from the conventionally sentimental story of the child of the forest and her white lover. This coarseness, which may be seen in many parts of his work where it usually mars the fine artistic unity of his best scenes, may also be the cause of Parkman's limitations as an historian. He often seems to misrepresent his subject, not by his little additions to the record, for the additions are both probable and entirely characteristic, but by the excessive emphasis which he puts upon physical conflicts and the clash of powerful personalities. His selection and arrangement of details achieve many genuine and valuable insights such as that into the feelings of the actors of his drama, but they leave out too many of the economic and other social factors beyond the immediate events. Parkman carries us into the midst of a battle, but he sometimes forgets to tell us what the fighting is all about. But for the dozens of historians who can and do tell us, there are only a few—William Carlos Williams, Samuel Eliot Morison, and Allen Tate among them—who can take us to the spot and say with such conviction, "This is how it felt. This is how it was."

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## Landfall

SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

Et potestas eius a mari usque ad mare, et a fluminibus usque ad fines terrae.

And his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

—Zechariah ix 10

SUN SET under a clear horizon about 5.30, every man in the fleet watching for a silhouette of land against its red disk; but no land was there. All hands were summoned as usual, and after they had said their evening prayers and sung the *Salve Regina* "which all seamen are accustomed to say and sing in their own fashion," Columbus from the sterncastle made his men a little speech, reminding them of the grace Our Lord had shown them in conducting them so safely and prosperously with fair winds and a clear course, and in comforting them with signs of better things to come; and he urged the night watch to keep a particularly sharp lookout on the forecastle, reminding them that although he had given orders to do no night sailing after reaching a point 700 leagues from the Canaries, the great desire of all to see land had decided him to carry on that night. Hence all must make amends for this temerity by keeping a particularly good watch, and looking

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From *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, by Samuel Eliot Morison, by permission of Little, Brown & Co. and The Atlantic Monthly Press. Copyright 1942, by Samuel Eliot Morison.

sharp for land; and to him who first sighted it he would then and there give a silk doublet, in addition to the annuity of 10,000 maravedis that the Sovereigns had promised. The gromet then sang his little ditty for changing the watch and turned the *ampolleta*, boastwain Chachu bellowed out the Castilian equivalent to "Watch below lay belo-o-w!" and the men took their stations with eyes well peeled.

During the eleven and a half hours since sunrise, with a brisk trade wind and the heaviest following sea of the entire voyage, the fleet had made 78 miles, an average of almost 7 knots. At sunset it breezed up to gale force, until the vessels were tearing along at 9 knots. At the same time Columbus ordered the course changed from WSW back to the original West. Why he did this, nobody has explained. I suspect that it was simply a desire to prove that he was right. He had begun the voyage by steering a course due west for Japan, and so he wished to pick up land on a due west course. I have known commanders, good seamen too, who are like that. Or the change may have been just a hunch. If so, it was a good one, for the WSW course would have missed Guanahani, and put the fleet next day in a dangerous position with the long shelterless shore of Long Island under its lee. Common prudence would have made Columbus heave-to for the night, since shoals and rocks invisible by moonlight might lie ahead. *Maria's* pilot, Pera-lonso Niño, is said to have so advised him; but the Captain General felt that this was no time for common prudence. He had promised the men to turn back if land were not made within three days, and he intended to make all possible westing in this gale of wind. So the signal was made for *oeste*!

Anyone who has come onto the land under sail at night from an uncertain position knows how tense the atmosphere aboard ship can be. And this night of October 11-12 was one big with destiny for the human race, the most momentous ever experienced aboard any ship in any sea. Some of the boys doubtless slept, but nobody else. Juan de la Cosa and the Pin-

zons are pacing the high poops of their respective vessels, frequently calling down to the men at the tiller a testy order—keep her off damn your eyes must I go below and take the stick myself?—pausing at the break to peer under the main course and sweep the western horizon, then resting their eyes by looking up at the stars. Consultation as to whether or not to shorten sail; Martín Alonso perhaps confiding to pilot Cristóbal García that he doesn't like carrying sail this way in a gale of wind with possible shoals ahead, but if that crazy Genoese can carry sail we can carry sail; *Pinta* can stand it better than that Galician tub, and heave-to quicker if anything shows up, and I want one of you men of Palos to win that *albricias*, d'ye see? Lookouts on the forecastles and in the round-tops talking low to each other—Hear anything? Sounds like breakers to me—nothing but the bow wave you fool—I tell you we won't sight land till Saturday, I dreamt it, and my dreams—you and your dreams, here's a hundred maravedis says we raise it by daylight. . . . They tell each other how they would have conducted the fleet—The Old Man should never have set that spritsail, she'll run her bow under—if he'd asked my advice, and I was making my third voyage when he was playing in the streets of Genoa, I'd have told him. . . . Under such circumstances, with everyone's nerves taut as the weather braces, there was almost certain to be a false alarm of land.

An hour before moonrise, at 10 P.M., it came. Columbus, standing on the sterncastle, thought he saw a light, "so uncertain a thing that he did not wish to declare that it was land," but called Pedro Gutiérrez to have a look, and he thought he saw it too. Rodrigo Sánchez was then appealed to, "but he saw nothing because he was not in a position where he could see anything." One guesses that Rodrigo was fed up with false alarms, and merely stuck his head out of the companionway to remark discouragingly that he didn't see nothing; no, not a thing. The light, Columbus said, was like a little wax candle

rising and falling," and he saw it only once or twice after speaking to Gutiérrez.

At this juncture one of the seamen named Pedro Yzquierdo, a native of Lepe, thought he saw a light and sung out, "*Lumbre! tierra!*" Pedro de Salcedo, Columbus's page-boy, piped up with "It's already been seen by my master," and Columbus, who heard the cry, snubbed the man with, "I saw and spoke of that light, which is on land, some time ago."

What was this feeble light resembling a wax candle rising and falling, which Columbus admits that only a few besides himself ever saw? It cannot have been a fire or other light on San Salvador, or any other island; for, as the real landfall four hours later proves, the fleet at 10 P.M. was at least 35 miles off shore. The 400,000 candlepower light now on San Salvador, 170 feet above sea level, is not visible nearly so far. One writer has advanced the theory that the light was made by Indians torching for fish—why not lighting a cigar?—But Indians do not go fishing in 3000 fathoms of water 35 miles offshore at night in a gale wind. The sentimental school of thought would have this light supernatural, sent by the Almighty to guide and encourage Columbus; but of all moments in the voyage, this is the one when he least needed encouragement, and he had laid his course straight for the nearest land. I agree heartily with Admiral Murdock, "the light was due to the imagination of Columbus, wrought up to a high pitch by the numerous signs of land encountered that day." Columbus admitted that only a few even thought they saw it. Anyone who has had much experience trying to make night landfalls with a sea running knows how easy it is to be deceived, especially when you are very anxious to pick up a light. Often two or three shipmates will agree that they see "it," then "it" disappears, and you realize that it was just another illusion. There is no need to criticize Columbus's seamanship because he sighted an imaginary light; but it is not easy to defend the fact that for this



false landfall, which he must have known the next day to have been imaginary, he demanded and obtained the annuity of 10,000 maravedis promised by the Sovereigns to the man who first sighted land. The best we can say in extenuation is to point out that glory rather than greed prompted this act of injustice to a seaman; Columbus could not bear to think that anyone but himself sighted land first. That form of male vanity is by no means absent from the seafaring tribe today.

At 2 A.M. October 12 the moon, past full, was riding about 70° high over Orion on the port quarter, just the position to illuminate anything ahead of the ships. Jupiter was rising in the east; Saturn had just set, and Deneb was nearing the western horizon, toward which all waking eyes were directed. There hung the Square of Pegasus, and a little higher and to the northward Cassiopeia's Chair. The Guards of Polaris, at 15° beyond "feet," told the pilots that it was two hours after midnight. On speed the three ships, *Pinta* in the lead, their sails silver in the moonlight. A brave trade wind is blowing and the caravels are rolling, plunging and throwing spray as they cut down the last invisible barrier between the Old World and the New. Only a few moments now, and an era that began in remotest antiquity will end.

Rodrigo de Triana, lookout on *Pinta's* forecastle, sees something like a white sand cliff gleaming in the moonlight on the western horizon, then another, and a dark line of land connecting them. "*Tierra! tierra!*" he shouts, and this time land it is.

Martín Alonso Pinzón, after a quick verification, causes a lombard already loaded and primed to be fired as the agreed signal, and shortens sail in order to wait for the flagship. As soon as *Santa María* approached (remembered *Pinta's* steward many years later) Columbus called out, "Señor Martín Alonso, you have found land!" and Pinzón replied, "Sir, my reward is not lost," and Columbus called back, "I give you five thousand maravedis as a present!"

By Columbus's reckoning the land was distant about 6 miles. The fleet had made 65 miles in the eight and a half hours since sunset, an average better than  $7\frac{1}{2}$  knots; according to our reckoning they were very near latitude  $24^{\circ}$  N, longitude  $74^{\circ} 20'$  W when Rodrigo sang out.

As the fleet was heading straight for a lee shore, Columbus wisely ordered all sail to be lowered except the *papahigo*, which as Las Casas explains was the main course without bonnets; and with the main yard braced sharp and port tacks aboard, *Santa María*, *Pinta* and *Niña* jogged off-and-on until daylight. When they appeared to be losing the land they wore around to the starboard tack, so the net result was a southerly drift at a safe distance from the breakers, during the remaining two and a half hours of moonlit night. The windward side of the island today is strewn with the wrecks of vessels that neglected this precaution.

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# The Death of Stonewall Jackson

ALLEN TATE

A RATTLESNAKE UNCOILS  
IN THE WILDERNESS

FOR THE FIFTH time Lee was dividing his army in the presence of a more powerful enemy. From the council of the cracker boxes Jackson went to issue his orders. Stuart's cavalry was to accompany the expedition, throwing out a screen between the Second Corps and the Federal army. The trains were to follow the Carthapin Road, so that the infantry could protect them from Federal raiding parties. The infantry was to march down the Furnace Road, almost due south, until the head of the column struck the Brock Road; there it was to turn west a few hundred yards into the secret road leading up to the Orange Plank Road. On both sides of that road the infantry would deploy for the attack. The march was to be made with great speed; no random shots were to be fired; and stragglers, lest they fall into the hands of the Yankees and give the exploit away, were to be bayoneted. Lee was to hold his own in front with 17,000 men.

Jackson's 23,000 were already pouring down the Furnace Road as their leader came to the roadside to look at them. There he sat, his cap pulled down over his eyes, his heavy jaw

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stuck out, his lips drawn to a thin line. He joined the march, his staff trotting in the rear.

Some distance farther on General Lee sat his horse, and Jackson, approaching him, drew rein for a few last words. They talked in low tones. Then Lee nodded his head, as if in assent to Jackson's speech. Jackson, his left hand on Little Sorrel's neck, pointed with his right in the direction in which his men were marching; and, his face flushed, he turned away.

The men moved swiftly over the road. They were marching away from the enemy, but by this time they knew Old Jack so well that not one of them believed he was leaving the enemy behind. A kind of excitement, as on the march to Manassas, quickened their step. The warm sun filtered through the trees, drenching the bright bayonets. The pace increased. The sun grew hotter. Here and there men fainted in the ranks. Never slackening, the long rattlesnake, ten miles from head to tail, uncoiled in the wilderness.

Staff-officers, sweating their horses, crowded by the infantry packed in the road. The foot cavalry taunted them.

"Say, hyar's one of Ole Jack's little boys; let him by, boys!"

"Have a good breakfast this mornin', sonny?"

"Better hurry up or you'll catch it for getting behind."

"Tell Old Jack we're all a-comin'."

"Don't let him start the fuss till we get thar."

At Chancellorsville General Hooker, having made the circuit of his lines, enjoyed the amenities of spring fever, and aired himself on the broad porch of the Chancellor mansion. At about eight o'clock General Birney sent word to him that a great force was moving across his front at Hazel Grove. Hooker showed concern, and dispatched orders to Howard that he must look out for a flank attack and that his position, strong even though it was, might be strengthened. Howard replied that he "would send the whole rebel army his compliments and invite them to attack him." His compliments had not been sent, but the invitation was already issued.

The Confederate column was so large that Hooker at first supposed Lee was prolonging his left flank beyond the Furnace Road. Further news arrived, and the truth, of course, with it. The Confederate column had turned south, due south. Lee was thus, after finding Sedgwick blocking his direct way to Richmond, retreating upon Gordonsville. He was at last playing the game as he, Hooker, had laid down its rules in his congratulatory message to his troops. A battery at Hazel Grove shelled Jackson's trains, and forced them to another road. About noon General Sickles advanced with his corps upon Catherine Furnace, and attacked Jackson's rear. Two brigades returned to repel the attack; Anderson on the Plank Road delivered Sickles a counter-attack; and although Sickles had advanced so far that the Confederate army was actually cut in two, Jackson gave the calamity as much attention as he would have given the news that a war-canoe full of South Sea Islanders was setting out to capture Richmond! The more men, in Jackson's opinion, sent from the center of the Federal line, the longer it would take them to get back to Howard's support when he fell upon him.

But, as a matter of fact, Hooker was not sure that Lee was retreating: if he had been sure he would have sent a greater force than Sickles' to "capture his artillery." For Hooker was demoralized, drowning in his vast uncertainty, and he clutched at straws. As the hours passed and Jackson's column disappeared, Hooker performed one of those feats of oblivion that only persons under great strain can achieve: because the marching column was no longer visible he was able to put it out of mind.

At two o'clock the two brigades that had turned back to stave off Sickles took up their march: Sickles was quiet. At the same time Old Jack was pushing ahead on the Brock Road. His leading brigade, Rodes' division, reached the Orange Plank Road, by which the Second Corps, turning eastward, would

surprise Howard. But at the Plank Road General Jackson met General Fitzhugh Lee.

"General," said Lee, "if you will ride with me, halting your columns here out of sight, I will show you the great advantage of attacking down the old Turnpike road. . . . Bring only one courier, as you will be in view from the top of the hill."

The three mounted officers rode a mile to the hill. Just a few hundred yards away, to the east, the Federal right wing lay in plain view. Jackson bent forward on his horse. The color rose in his face. His eyes seemed fixed.

A line of intrenchments, facing south, lay before him. Stack after stack of muskets covered the rear. Two cannon were drawn up on the pike. But not a man stood in the trenches, and the cannon were deserted. Farther away groups of men sat round on the grass, smoking, cooking, sleeping. Some were playing cards, others were drawing their rations. To one side beeves were being slaughtered.

By the Orange Plank Road Howard would be taken in flank; by the Turnpike he would be crushed from the rear.

Fully five minutes Jackson looked at the spectacle. His figure remained motionless and he said nothing; but his lips moved. He suddenly wheeled his horse towards the courier. He said:

"Tell General Rodes to move across the Plank Road and halt when he gets to the old Turnpike. I will join him there."

By four o'clock Rodes' division had come to the Turnpike and the leading brigades had advanced a mile eastward towards Howard's innocents. Colston's division was close up in the rear of Rodes'. Ambrose Hill brought up the rear. Rodes was already deploying his men for the attack. The main column had not seen a single Federal soldier. The cavalry had picked up only a few patrols. Not a shot had been fired.

Jackson, down on the Brock Road, was impatiently waiting for his men to get up into line. Lieutenant Smith rode up and found him sitting on a stump, letter-book and pencil in hand. He was writing this note:

Near 3 P. M., May 2, 1863.

General,

The enemy has made a stand at Chancellor's which is about two miles from Chancellorsville. I hope as soon as practicable to attack. I trust that an ever kind Providence will bless us with great success.

Respectfully,

T. J. Jackson, Lt.-Genl.

Genl. R. E. Lee

The leading division is up, and the next two appear to be well closed.

The men on the Turnpike were now forbidden to speak. Rapidly and silently they spread out. Long parallel lines of battle were forming at right angles to the Turnpike: Rodes in front; Colston in second line two hundred yards back; Ambrose Hill in third line. Skirmishers, crowling through the brush, covered the whole front, and awaited the signal to advance. The sun's rays were already lengthening over the tops of the trees, and in the depths of the woods the air grew cool.

The murmuring roar of the battle east of the Furnace had died away. As the men stood motionless in line, the low whine of insects filled the air. All round them stretched away the impenetrable woods. Stunted oaks, twisted alders enmeshed the earth with a net. Gray willows trailed their branches on the ground. The huckleberry bushes, the dogwood and swamp honeysuckle, blooming, struggled in the tangle. The men waited.

The thump of artillery wheels suddenly stirred the men. The guns came to the front.

Jackson, astride Little Sorrel on the Turnpike, held his watch in his hand; his lips compressed. At his right stood General Rodes, and at the right of General Rodes was Major Blackford, commanding the skirmishers.

"Are you ready, General Rodes?" said Jackson.

"Yes, sir!"

"You can go forward, sir."

#### THE MOUNTAIN ROAD

At five-thirty the men of General Howard's corps were still lolling in the open fields of Talley's farm. Suddenly a deer ran from the woods towards the breastworks; then a rabbit; in a few seconds, rabbits, deer, foxes scampered through the meadow.

In the quiet a brassy screech came out of the woods, lengthening into the cadences of a bugle call. Other bugles took up the noise. Before the men of the Eleventh Corps could get to their feet, a horde of yelling demons, rising out of the earth, were upon them. Far to the north and south the long, ragged gray lines moved forward like a machine. The forest rang with the wild Confederate yell. The lazy pickets of the Federals fired a few scattered shots, and fled.

Within ten minutes the first brigade of the Eleventh Corps was routed. Pell-mell it rushed back on the other troops, carrying them along in the rout. Here and there regiments tried to change front and stay the enemy. The Confederates came steadily on like a giant harvester, cutting down the men trying to stand before them.

At Talley's farm scattered regiments lined up behind breastworks to meet the onset. In the reeling smoke the defenders looked out and saw the vast mass of the Confederates: they saw the flash of the rifles, the oncoming battle flags, the tanned faces, the blazing eyes of their mysterious, terrible foes. All their mounted officers tumbled like bags of meal to the ground. The defenders fell back in panic.

The first stronghold of the enemy had been carried, and Jackson riding to the front near Talley's farm shouted to his men to go on. As never before his reserve had left him. His eyes



burned like coals. He met officers and cried out orders. He raised his left hand to the level of his eyes, the palm turned out. . . .

To the east of the farm he saw, in the rolling meadows, a crowd of fear-crazed men. Men fought one another, kicked their comrades out of the way. Riderless horses ran down the fugitives; wounded horses, still in the traces, squealed and plunged. Knapsacks, muskets, blankets; overturned wagons; wrecked cannon; wounded men fighting the corpses that fell on them at every step; all in a whirling mass. Through the green cornfields squads of prisoners, under guard, marched to the Confederate rear.

Jackson saw within his reach the destruction of the Federal army. The panic would spread. His men must press on. They must go up the old Mountain Road to the northeast towards the United States Ford, and cut Hooker off from his retreat.

At Dowdall's Tavern the Confederates met a momentary check. But only for a moment. As the Confederate first line dropped men at every step before the rifles of the four or five thousand rallied Yankees, the second line, Colstons' division, pushed on, carrying the position. The Federal infantry disappeared, swallowed by the forest.

A mile and a half away General Hooker sat on the porch of the Chancellor house. The firing in the east had died away. To the south the faint spatter of musketry told Hooker that Sickles was still pursuing the retreating Confederates. Suddenly artillery boomed from the west. One of the general's aides got up and walked out into the road. He raised his glass. He turned and ran back to the porch.

"My God," he said, pointing up the road, "here they come!"

General Hooker mounted his horse and rode to meet the panic-stricken men flying towards him from the woods. They said their right wing had been annihilated. They ran on. Then, from the southwest, from Hazel Grove, another mass of confusion emerged. The trains of the Third Corps were fired on

by the Confederate skirmishers; they joined the rout. The artillery held fast. Fifty guns still confronted the advancing Confederates.

It was not these guns, however, that saved Hooker from immediate disaster. For it was now past seven o'clock, and though the sky was still light overhead, the thickets, full of shadows, threw Rodes' men into confusion. The men were mixed, and many wandered in the woods looking for their officers; officers looked for their regiments.

Where the Mountain Road joins the Turnpike the men were ordered to halt. They began to reform. The firing died away.

General Rodes sent back a courier saying that there were no troops between his line and the Fairview Heights, an open space just northeast of Hazel Grove. Colonel Cobb reported that the entrenchments, less than a mile from Hooker's headquarters, had been occupied by his skirmishers.

But there was a lull in the battle. The mighty attack for the moment had spent itself. Lee, in front, was powerless to take the offensive. Longstreet's absence had crippled him.

The lull was to last only long enough for Jackson to get Hill's division, not yet engaged, into the front line. When the reports of confusion reached Jackson he was at Dowdall's Tavern. Sending a courier to Hill to come forward prepared for a night attack, he rode forward on the Turnpike. He rallied the men. He turned to Colonel Cobb.

"I need your help for a time. This disorder must be corrected. As you go along the right, tell the troops from me to get into line and preserve their order."

It was now eight-thirty. Hill was coming on. Colonel Crutchfield, Jackson's chief of artillery, pushed his guns forward beyond the infantry and opened them on Chancellorsville. The fifty guns at Hazel Grove returned a terrific fire. The reforming of the lines was delayed. But Hill still came on.

Hill's leading brigade, under General Lane, advanced a little beyond the junction of the Turnpike and the Mountain Road,

and threw out his skirmishers. He was far in the advance, and at the moment unsupported. The 7th North Carolina he stationed on the right of the Turnpike; the 18th, on the left astride the Mountain Road. He told his men to be on the lookout every moment, and if they heard firing to fire back. Then he returned to the cross-roads.

There Jackson stood alone. Hill had not arrived; his staff-officers were away. Lane came up and asked for further orders. Jackson raised his arm in the direction of the enemy. "Push right ahead, Lane, right ahead."

In a few minutes Hill arrived with a group of staff-officers. Jackson said:

"Press them, cut them off from United States Ford, Hill. Press them!"

Hill said he was ignorant of the country. Jackson told Captain Boswell, of the Signal Corps, to show Hill the way. General Hill and his guide rode off on the Mountain Road, and Jackson turned to follow, but a courier from Stuart stopped him. He read the report, and followed Hill at a distance up the road.

A hundred yards ahead he passed through the ranks of the 18th North Carolina, and riding on for another hundred yards or so, he halted. So quietly had Jackson's party moved that Major Barry, on the extreme left of the regiment, had not heard or even seen them pass.

Jackson and his staff were now between the battle-line of Lane's brigade and his line of skirmishers. There was no firing, but chopping and hacking towards the front indicated that the Federals were fortifying themselves. He listened intently. Then he turned his horse back towards the Turnpike, riding in advance of the party. He stopped again. He turned his head towards the Federal lines. The chopping continued.

General Hill rejoined Jackson's party, and the whole group of horsemen gathered in the rear of Jackson without a word. There was no talk; only the steady chopping in the distance.

Suddenly, some distance away south of the Turnpike, a single rifle shot rang out. The musketry, like seasoned planks clattering down from a great height, rolled along the line. The men of 18th North Carolina crouched in the woods. Major Barry saw through the trees eighty yards away a shadowy group of horsemen. They were surely Federal cavalry, and the firing south of the Turnpike meant that other squadrons lurked in the woods.

He ordered his men to fire, then he ordered them to fire a second time.

Every rider in the group fell to the ground or escaped but Jackson. He was still mounted. But he was hit. Little Sorrel, terrified, plunged towards the Federal lines, nearly brushing his master off among the thick trees. But he grabbed the bridle with his wounded hand. He tried to pull the horse back towards the road.

A few yards from the Turnpike one of his staff-officers seized the reins. At that instant Jackson reeled from the saddle and fell into Captain Wilbourn's arms. His time had come.

#### THE TURNPIKE

They laid him on the ground. General Hill rode up and leaped from his horse.

"General, are you much hurt?"

"I think I am," he said. "All my wounds are from my own men."

General Hill pulled off his gauntlets, which were full of blood, and bandaged his arm with a handkerchief. The left arm was shattered at the elbow; a bullet had pierced the left wrist and hand; another had lodged in the palm of his right hand. He still lay in front of his own lines, and two Federal skirmishers appeared; but Hill quietly told his staff to "take charge of those men"; they were seized.

Litter-bearers could not be found. Jackson was still lying in the woods near the Turnpike. He lay with his eyes closed, and seemed to hear nothing. Hill ordered the staff not to say who Jackson was. He had not been lifted up, but, his head resting on Hill's breast, he opened his eyes.

"Tell them," he said, "simply that you have a wounded Confederate officer."

The officers got him up on his feet and leaning in their arms he came on to the road. As he gained the road shells and canister crashed through the trees, and the young men, laying him down, crouched round him in a semicircle, their backs to the enemy, to shield him. The shells went high.

Jackson tried to rise. Smith said:

"You must be still, General, it will cost you your life."

The shells flew still higher, and Jackson was got on his feet again. The Confederate infantry poured down the road towards the front line. He turned off the road into the brush to keep them from recognizing him. As he turned, General Pender, whose men crowded the road, saw the stumbling group, and came towards them. He asked who the wounded man was.

"A Confederate officer."

He came nearer, and recognized the officer. He said a few hurried words of regret; then he added that his men might have to fall back.

Shells screamed overhead. Bullets nipped the leaves off the scrub trees. The shouts of men to be led on rose over the tumult, and men, terrified by the confusion, left the ranks and hid in the woods. Riderless horses milled at the roadside, the dead and dying trampled under their feet.

In the wild panic of the moment, Jackson, bleeding fast, raised himself to his full height. He pushed the aides aside.

"You must hold your ground, General Pender, you must hold your ground to the last."

Growing suddenly weak he sank to the earth. The young officers caught him, and started to lead him away. Captain

Leigh came up with a litter. They lay Old Jack upon it. The slow march began again.

Still in the woods, one of the bearers, shot in the arm, let go; and Jackson fell on his left side to the ground. He groaned.

Canister and shells from the enemy's fifty guns fell thicker than before. Limbs dropped off trees. Shells ploughed furrows in the road. The canister, sprinkling the road, threw sparks off the stones.

Smith stooped over him and said:

"Are you much hurt, General?"

"No, Mr. Smith, don't trouble yourself about me. Win the battle first and attend to the wounded afterwards."

His voice was perfectly self-possessed. A moonbeam streaked through the trees full upon his face. It was pale. His lips were tightly drawn. There was a smear of blood on his face.

The young men resumed the march. In a few minutes they came to Doctor McGuire who was waiting with an ambulance. Doctor McGuire knelt down.

"I hope you are not much hurt, General."

"I am badly injured, Doctor, I fear I am dying."

He lay silent.

"I am glad you have come, Doctor, I think the wound in my shoulder is still bleeding."

The doctor looked to the bandages. They put him into the ambulance. He lay by Colonel Crutchfield, who was badly wounded. They gave him whisky and morphine. Then the ambulance started. It bumped and jolted. Crutchfield moaned; he was suffering. Jackson lay still; he said nothing; he lay with his lips tight and his forehead pinched.

"Doctor," he said, "can you stop the ambulance? Can't you do something for Colonel Crutchfield?"

The ambulance bumped and jolted on.

At the field hospital they put him in bed. He slept for nearly three hours, and when he was awake Doctor McGuire asked him if the amputation should be done at once.

"Yes, certainly, Doctor McGuire, do whatever you think best for me."

About half past three Jackson came out of the chloroform, and a messenger from Stuart was there. Doctor McGuire tried to keep him out, but he said the safety of the Confederate army hung in the balance. Jackson had been reticent and only General Hill knew his plans; but General Hill, the messenger said, had been wounded, and had sent for Stuart.

He walked into the tent.

"Well, Major," said Jackson, "I am glad to see you. I thought you were killed."

Major Pendleton told him the uncertain affairs at the front. Jackson knitted his forehead, and set his lips. Then his nostrils dilated and his eyes flashed. It was only for a moment.

"I don't know—I—I don't know—I can't tell. Say to General Stuart that he must go on and do what he thinks best."

So Pendleton left Jackson. And as Jackson's concentration failed him, the Federal army, though it was to be battered and sorely defeated, had virtually escaped.

Next morning, as the Confederates drove Hooker's army away from the Chancellorsville entrenchments and reunited their two wings, General Lee heard the news of Jackson's fall.

He wrote this note:

General;—I have just received your note, informing me that you were wounded. I cannot express my regret at the occurrence. Could I have directed events, I should have chosen for the good of the country to be disabled in your stead.

I congratulate you upon the victory, which is due to your skill and energy.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant  
R. E. Lee, General.

#### GUINEY STATION

Jackson was still in the field hospital when Lee's aide brought him the note.

"General Lee," he said, "is very kind, but he should give the praise to God."

His pain had now nearly ceased, and he talked with all his old animation. He could hear the battle raging, and soon the reports came in. When the Stonewall Brigade happened to be mentioned for good service, he said, "Good! Good!"

"Some day the men of that brigade will be proud to say to their children, 'I was one of the Stonewall Brigade.' The name belongs to them, not to me."

He talked at intervals all day, and that night the simple-hearted man slept free of pain. Next morning he was getting better. General Lee sent him a message: "Give him my affectionate regards, and tell him to make haste and get well, and come back to me as soon as he can. He has lost his left arm, but I have lost my right."

Jackson discussed his plan, which was not carried out. He said he intended to cut the enemy off from the United States Ford, forcing him to hack his way through. "My men," he said, "sometimes fail to drive the enemy from a position, but they always fail to drive us away." "Our movement," he said, "was a great success, the most successful military movement of my life. But I expect to receive far more credit for it than I deserve. . . . I feel His hand led me—let us give Him the glory."

By eight o'clock on the 6th of May General Hooker had escaped across the Rapidan. There was no pursuit. The Richmond authorities had held back the army supplies and reinforcements. The war, they said in a few days, would soon be over.

On the 6th General Jackson was taken in an ambulance to Guiney Station, south of Fredericksburg, where he lay in bed in a house surrounded by trees. He seemed to be better, and on Thursday, which was the 7th, his wife and little girl came from Richmond. Suddenly he grew weak, and he could hardly talk to them.

Pneumonia had set in. The wounds were healing, but he



had exposed himself and he was very ill. Where had he got pneumonia? He did not say; could not remember. On the night of May 1st he had slept without cover on pine-needles; he had forgotten it.

Sunday morning he was almost too weak to talk. He told his wife he was ready to die if it was God's will. He told her he thought he had more work to do. At eleven o'clock Mrs. Jackson came in and sat by him on the bed. She said he could not live beyond the evening. "You are frightened, my child. Death is not so near. I may get well."

She fell upon the bed and cried, and told him again. Then he asked for Doctor McGuire.

"Doctor, Anna tells me I am to die today. Is it so?"

"Yes," the doctor said.

Jackson turned his head; he seemed to be thinking, thinking intensely.

"Very good, very good," he said in a low voice. "It is all right."

At noon Major Pendleton came to see him, and he asked:

"Who is preaching at headquarters today, Major?"

The major answered Doctor Lacy, and said the whole army was praying for him.

"Thank God, they are very kind to me."

His little girl was brought in, and he brightened; then he fell into delirium. He talked, talked. He was on the battlefield. Now he was in Lexington. Now he was praying in camp. For a long time he lay still. Then he cried:

"Order A. P. Hill to prepare for action! Pass the infantry to the front! Tell Major Hawks——"

He lay still again. After a while he said in a clear voice:

"Let's cross over the river and rest in the shade of the trees."

## De Soto and the New World

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

SHE—Courage is strength—and you are vigilant, sagacious, firm besides. But I am beautiful—as “a cane box, called petaca, full of unbored pearls.” I am beautiful: a city greater than Cuzco; rocks loaded with gold as a comb with honey. Believe it. You will not dare to cease following me—at Apalchi, at Cutifachiqui, at Mabilla, turning from the sea facing inland. And in the end you shall receive of me, nothing—save one long caress as of a great river passing forever upon your sweet course. Balboa lost his eyes on the smile of the Chinese ocean; Cabeza de Vaca lived hard and saw much; Pizarro, Cortez, Coronado—but you, Hernando de Soto, keeping the lead four years in a savage country, against odds, “without fortress or support of any kind,” you are mine, Black Jasmine, mine.—

On Friday, the thirtieth day of May, in the year 1548, the army, fresh from Cuba, landed in Florida, on the west coast, two leagues from the town of an Indian chief named Ucita. The ground was very fenny and encumbered with dense thickets and high trees.

From this place, Espíritu Santo, they began their eventful journey, having first sent a small squadron north to find a

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From *In the American Grain*, by William Carlos Williams, published by New Directions, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York City. Copyright 1925, by James Laughlin.

base toward which they might travel. And they waited two months for its return "which seemed like a thousand years," but finally the ships appeared and with good news. De Soto divided his forces, sending a few back to Cuba and leaving some others as a garrison at the place they then occupied. With the rest he set out paralleling the coast toward Anhaica Apalachi where they were to spend the winter that year. The course was north and west, a march of about a hundred leagues—through obscure and intricate parts: native villages in the swamps, Caliquen, Napateca, Hurripacuxi, Paracoxi, Tocaste, Cale—outlandish names.

*She*—Who will recognize them? None but you. To the rest without definition but to you each a thing in itself, delicate, pregnant with sudden meanings.

The way had been difficult: through a great morass, misled, ambuscaded at the fords, fighting, swimming, starving for a month at a time, thankful for a little parched corn, not even ripe, the cob and all being eaten as it was, and the stalk, too, for want of better.

*She*—It is de Soto! all goes forward somehow. But I am before you. It is my country. Everything is in accordance with my wish. Eight men start from a thicket, naked, and tattooed, your lancers rush upon them, but one falls to his knees crying out, "Do not kill me. I am a Christian!" It is Juan Ortiz, relic of Narvaez' forces, whom I have nursed tenderly for you these twelve years, teaching him the wild language. Witness my love. But I shall take him from you when he is most needed.—

At Anhaica Apalachi, through the winter, they lived with difficulty on game and other stores, such as they could take from the natives, miserably, as best they were able.

On Wednesday, the third of March, 1549, the Governor left his winter quarters at Apalachi to seek Yupaha, of which a

young slave had told them: a country toward the rising sun, governed by a woman, where there was gold in quantity.

Now the second year was starting. Led by the youth they continued to bear east and north in the hope of finding the country of which he had spoken: days, weeks, a month—with small food, such want of meat and salt that oftentimes, in many places, a sick man would say, "Now, if I had but a slice of meat, or only a few lumps of salt, I should not thus die." But the Indians, skillful with the bow, would get abundance of deer, turkeys, rabbits and other game. Crossing a stream after nine last days of forced marching they came out into a pine grove on the far bank. Here all direction was lost. "He went about for the road and returned to us desperate."

The Governor had brought thirteen sows to Florida, which had increased to three hundred swine; and the maize having failed for three days, he ordered killed daily, for each man, half a pound of pork, on which small allowance, and some boiled herbs, the people with much difficulty lived.

From Apalachi in Florida to Cutifachiqui, on the Savanna River, two days' march from the sea, where presently after the greatest hardships they arrived, they had traveled northeast it may be four hundred and thirty leagues. At this place, it appeared well to all to make a settlement; but Soto, as it was his object to find another treasure like that of Atabalipa, lord of Peru, would not be content to stay. The natives were asked if they had knowledge of any great lord further on, to which they answered that twelve days' travel thence was a province called Chiaha, subject to a chief of Coca.

The Governor then resolved, having rested his army, to go at once in quest of that country, taking with him a quantity of pearls which the cacique had given him; and being an inflexible man, and dry of word, who, although he liked to know what the others all thought and had to say, after he had once made up his mind he did not like to be opposed, and as he ever acted as he thought best, all bent to his will. So they

turned north and continued forward until the fall, bending about through a quiet country.

*She*—For you I come severally as envoys from the chief men upon the road, bearing baskets of mulberries, a honey comb, marten skins and the hides of deer, and in calabashes the oil of walnuts and bear fat, drawn like olive oil, clear and of good taste.—

And what? Silences, death, rotting trees; insects “so that the sails were black with them and the men laughed, in spite of their forlorn condition, to see each others’ faces so swollen and out of shape in the morning”; alligators, reptiles, a wild rose “like that of Spain, but with less leaves, because it grew in the woods.” Sun, moon, stars, rain, heat, snow; water to the neck for days; blue-butterflies among the green palmetto leaves; grapes and others that grow on vines along the ground; plums of two sorts, vermillion and gray, of the form and size of walnuts, having three or four stones in them; wolves, deer, jackals, rabbits,—

*She*—To make you lonesome, ready for my caresses.

“Unprepared, we believed ourselves on a footing of peace, so much so that some of us, putting our arms in the luggage, had gone without any.”

Then to battle! It is Mabilla, the staked town.

*She*—It is I, in my son, Tuscaloosa; tall of person, muscular, lean and symmetrical. All is you; I, too, am all—one either side. Men, horses, hogs—all goes down in our fury. Now you feel me. Many times I shall drive you back from the palisades. But you come again. What shall I do to govern that lust—which if it break, I am the most defeated? Those in chains having set down their burdens near the fence, my people lift them

on their backs and bring them into the town. Thus, to anger you, I have possession of all the baggage, the clothes, pearls and whatever else you had besides—lost in the conflagration. I am strong! I shall possess you.

Oh, but I lie. I am weak. I fail. I cannot take you. What are they but savages—who know nothing? they wound you, they wound you, and every arrow has upon its barbs a kiss from my lips. There is one in your thigh, between the edges of the armor. Thrice you fall before reaching the gate! The fools, madmen. It is into my own flesh, fifty, a hundred times deeper than into yours. And me it kills—but you, though you cannot grip the saddle because of it, you fight standing all day in the stirrups. I divide myself to take you and it is myself that wounds myself, jealous even of your injuries, furious at that sweet touch of your flesh which my tools enjoy but I have—not yet. It is all you. The young Sylvestre fainting on the back track; Pedro Moron diving from the bridge with a shower of arrows about him—swimming to safety; Don Carlos, alighting to pull an arrow from his horse's breast at the stockade, receives one himself, in at the neck, out behind—and falls prostrate.

After heaviest losses in men, beasts and possessions they prevailed and of the Indians all were killed, two thousand five hundred more or less, all having fought with the utmost bravery and devotion.

The Governor now learning that Francisco Maldonado was waiting for him at the port of Ochuse, six days' travel distant to the southward, he caused Juan Ortiz to keep the news secret, that he might not be interrupted in his purpose; because the pearls he wished to send to Cuba for show, that their fame might raise the desire of coming to Florida, had been lost, and he feared that, hearing of him without seeing gold or silver or other thing of value from that land, it would come to have such a reputation that no one would be found willing to go there when men would be wanted; so he determined to send no

news of himself until he should discover a rich country. So that to Tuscaloosa must be given credit, in effect, for a great victory.

On Sunday, the eighteenth of November, the sick being found to be getting well,, the Governor again set out, moving west, to Chicaca, a small town of twenty houses, but well stocked with maize. There he determined to pass the second winter. The Indians, at peace, came frequently with turkeys and rabbits and other food—but secretly they were plotting other matters.

Suddenly, on a certain night, the air above the straw roofs is filled with flame. Sentries and the enemy arrive in the town together; a terrific confusion, four columns converging upon the same point. Indians moving about freely in the town, because of the peace that existed, had that night brought the fire in little pots, not to be seen. Everything is aflame. Men come out naked from their beds. The horses strive to free themselves, some succeed. The hogs squeal and perish. Soto and one other are all that are able to mount. He drives upon an Indian with his lance and transpierces him. His saddle girth, hastily adjusted, slips and he falls. Who will straighten out the confusion in the night? Who will gather the naked and disarmed soldiers, among the smoke, the flames, the noise? The Governor is up. He directs as best he can. But, by luck, the horses dashing about through the smoke, spread terror to the savages who think it the cavalry forming for an attack. Alarmed they escape from the stockade.

*She*—Naked, armless, acold you draw off, in the morning, to Chicacilla, protecting yourself as best you can—there to re-temper the swords and await what will happen. Some are reduced to straw mats for their only cover, lying now this way, now that to the fire, keeping warm as they are able.

And for this your people begin to hate you. It is my work. But again I am defeated, your last thought shall be for their safety. Because you have found no gold, only increasing hard-

ships; because of your obstinacy, unexplained, incredible to them—you will be compared meanly with far lesser spirits. It is their revenge, making you solitary—ready for my caresses.

And if, to survive, you yourself in the end turned native, this victory is sweetest of all. Bitter the need that at Nilco will cause that horrid slaughter: You already sick, in grave danger, thinking of the men. Let them talk, my Indian: I will console you. None but you, the wise, the brave, could have answered.

At Chicacilla, the balance of the winter over, once more they gathered their strength and again set out to the westward, beginning the third summer. There was a town Quizquiz. Here, after struggling seven days through a wilderness having many pondy places, with thick forests, they came out upon the Great River.

He went to look at the river: swift and very deep; the water, flowing turbidly, bringing from above many trees and much timber, driven onward by its force.

The next day the chief of that country arrived.

*She*—It is I.

Two hundred canoes filled with men having weapons. They were painted with ochre, wearing great bunches of white and other plumes of many colors, having feathered shields in their hands, with which they sheltered the oarsmen on either side, the warriors standing erect from bow to stern, holding bows and arrows. The barge in which the chief came had an awning at the poop under which he sat; and there, from under the canopy, where the chief man was, the course was directed and orders issued to the rest. All came down together, and arrived within a stone's throw of the ravine, whence the chief said to the Governor, who was walking along the river bank, with others who bore him company, that he had come to visit, serve and obey him. The Governor expressed his pleasure, and be-



sought him to land, that they might the better confer; but the chief gave no reply, ordering three barges to draw near, wherein were great quantity of fish, and loaves like bricks, made of pulp of plums, which Soto receiving, gave him thanks and again entreated him to land.

Making the gifts had been a pretext, to discover if any harm might be done; but finding the Governor and his people on their guard, the chief began to draw off from the shore, when the crossbowmen, who were in readiness, with loud cries shot at the Indians, and struck down five or six of them.

*She*—Well done, Spaniard! like an Indian. Witness then my answer:

They retired with great order, not one leaving the oar, even though the one next to him might have fallen, and covering themselves they withdrew. These were fine looking men, very large and well formed; and what with the awnings, the plumes, and the shields, the pennons, and the number of people in the fleet, it appeared like a famous armada of galleys.

During the thirty days that were passed there, four piraguas were built, into three of which one morning, three hours before daybreak, the Governor ordered twelve cavalry to enter, four in each, men in whom he had confidence that they would gain the land notwithstanding the natives and secure passage or die. So soon as they had come ashore the piraguas returned and when the sun was two hours high, the people had all got over. The distance was nearly half a league: a man standing on the shore could not be told whether he were a man or something else, from the far side.

*She*—Now you are over, you have straddled me, this is my middle. Left to right, the end is the same. But here in the center I am not defeated. Go wander. Aquizo, Casqui, Pacaha. Take what you will. Clothe your men, yourself you will never

clothe save as I clothe you, in my own way. They have suffered, they have gone nearly bare. At Pacaha I have provisioned them in advance.

Shawls, deer skins, lion and bear skins, and many cat skins were found. Numbers who had been a long time badly covered here clothed themselves. Of the shawls they made mantles and cossocks. Of the deer skins were made jerkins, shirts, stockings and shoes; and from the bear skins they made very good cloaks. such as no water could get through. They found shields of raw cowhide out of which armor was made for the horses.

*She*—Look, then, Soto, upon this transformed army.—Here forty days and at the end I am beside you once more. Where is she now, Doña Ysobel, your helpmate, years since, in Cuba?

The chief of Pacaha bestowed on him two of his sisters telling him that they were tokens of love, for his remembrance, to be his wives. The name of one was Macanoche, that of the other Mochila. They were symmetrical, tall and full; Macanoche bore a pleasant expression; in her manners and features appeared the lady; the other was robust.

*She*—Ride upon the belly of the waters, building your boats to carry all across. Calculate for the current; the boats move with a force not their own, up and down, sliding upon that female who communicates to them, across all else, herself. And still there is that which you have not sounded, under the boats, under the adventure—giving to all things the current, the wave, the onwash of my passion. So cross and have done with it, you are safe—and I am desolate.

But you are mine and I will strip you naked—jealous of everything that touches you. Down, down to me—in and under and down, unbeated, the white kernel, the flame—the flame burning under water, that I cannot quench.

I will cause it to be known that you are a brute. Now it is no sea-ringed island, now it is no city in a lake: Come, here is room for search and countersearch. Come, blackbeard, tireless rider, with an arrow in the thigh. I wait for you—beyond the river. Follow me—if you can. Follow me, Señor, this is your country. I give it to you. Take it. Here are carriers for your burdens; here are girls for your beds; my best men for adversaries. You have beaten them all. My time is coming: you have seen how they defend their palisades for me; they have driven trees into the ground about their villages. They are men, tall, slim, full of strategies; they come against you naked, with their bows and arrows; they die at the paddles but none quivers. It is me they defend. I am for the brave, for the wise, for the victor. Watch yourself at the fords, at the porches of houses.

See how I have fled you, dashing into a lake there to freeze all night, coming forth at dawn, half drowned, my brows hidden in lily leaves. At the sight of your boats, at the breath of your name, the villages are left empty. Nothing can induce the chief to show himself. All have gone upstream to an island, carrying their goods with them. At the sight of your men in armor, terror strikes them; they plunge into the stream, pushing their possessions on little rafts, that escaping in haste, float downstream. I have fled, a single man, among my own people but your hounds scenting me out have dragged me down.

Now it begins to change. The third winter past, at Alimamu, it is the fourth year.

At Alimamu, where they learned to catch rabbits with Indian snares, Juan Ortiz died, a loss the Governor greatly regretted; for, without an interpreter, not knowing whither he was traveling, Soto feared to enter the country, lest he might get lost. The death was so great a hindrance to our going, whether on discovery or out of the country, that to learn of the Indians what would have been rendered in four words, it now became necessary to have the whole day; and oftener than

otherwise the very opposite was understood to what was asked; so that many times it happened the road traveled one day, or sometimes two or three days would have to be returned over, wandering up and down, lost in the thickets.

For four days marching was impossible because of the snow. When that ceased to fall, he traveled three days through a desert, a region so low, so full of lakes and bad passages, that at one time, for a whole day, the travel lay through water up to the knees at places, in others to the stirrups; and occasionally, for the distance of a few paces there was swimming. And he came to Tutelpinco, a town untenanted and found to be without maize, seated near a lake that flowed into the river with a great current.

*She*—Nearer, nearer.

Cayas, Quigaltam, Gauchoya—thither the Governor determined to go in a few days to learn if the sea was near. He had not over three hundred efficient men, nor more than forty horses. Some of the beasts were lame, and useful only in making out a show of a troop of cavalry.

At Guachoya he sent Juan de Anasco with eight of the cavalry down the river to discover what population might be there and get what knowledge there was of the sea. He was gone eight days and stated, when he got back, that in all that time he could not travel more than fourteen or fifteen leagues, on account of the great bogs that came out of the river, the canebrakes and thick shrubs that were along the margin, and that he had found no inhabited spot.

The river, the river.

The Governor sank into a deep despondency at sight of the difficulties that presented themselves to his reaching the sea; and, what was worse, from the way in which the men and horses were diminishing in numbers, he could not sustain himself in the country without succor. Of that reflection he pined.

But before he took to his pallet, he sent a message to the cacique of Quigaltam to say that he was the child of the sun, and whence he came all obeyed him, rendering him tribute; that he besought him to value his friendship, and to come where he was. By the same Indians the chief replied:

"As to what you say of your being the child of the sun, if you will cause him to dry up the great river, I will believe you; as to the rest, it is not my custom to visit any one, but rather all, of whom I have ever heard, have come to visit me, to serve and obey me, and pay me tribute, either voluntarily or by force. If you desire to see me, come where I am; if for peace, I will receive you with especial good will; if for war, I will await you in my town; but neither for you nor for any man, will I set back one foot."

When the messenger returned the Governor was already low, being very ill of fevers. He grieved that he was not in a state to cross the river at once to see if he could not abate that pride; though the stream was already flowing very powerfully, was nearly half a league broad, sixteen fathoms deep, rushing by in a furious torrent, and on either shore were many Indians; nor was his power any longer so great that he might disregard advantages, relying on his strength alone.

Every day the Indians of Guachoya brought fish, until they came in such plenty that the town was covered with them.

Now the Governor feared to repair the palisades that they might not suppose he stood in awe of them; and, lest the Indians rise, he ordered the slaughter at Nilco, to strike dread into the rest.

Conscious that the hour approached in which he should depart this life, Soto commanded that all the king's officers should be called before him, the captains and principal personages, to whom he made a speech. He told them that he was about to go into the presence of God, to give account of all his past life; and since He had been pleased to take him away at such a time, he, His most unworthy servant, rendered

Him hearty thanks. He confessed his deep obligations to them all, for their great qualities, their love and loyalty to his person, well tried in suffering of hardship. He begged that they would pray for him. He asked that they would relieve him of the charge he had over them as well as of the indebtedness he was under to them all, and to forgive him any wrongs they may have suffered at his hands. To prevent any divisions that might arise, as to who should command, he begged that they elect a principal person to be governor, and being chosen, they would swear before him to obey; that this would greatly satisfy him, abate somewhat the pains he suffered, and moderate the anxiety of leaving them in a country, they knew not where.

Baltasar de Gallegos responded in behalf of all, consoling him with remarks on the shortness of the life of this world, attended as it was by so many toils and afflictions, saying that whom God earliest called away, He showed particular favor; with many other things appropriate to such an occasion; and finally since it pleased the Almighty to take him to Himself, amid the deep sorrow which they not unreasonably felt, it was necessary and becoming in him, as in them, to conform to the Divine Will; that as respected the election of a governor, which he ordered, whomsoever his Excellency should name to the command, him would they obey. Thereupon the Governor nominated Luís Moscosco de Alvarado to be his captain-general; when by all those present was he straightway chosen and sworn Governor.

The next day, the twenty-first of May, departed this life the magnanimous, the virtuous, the intrepid captain, Don Hernando de Soto, Governor of Cuba and Adelantado of Florida. He was advanced by fortune, in the way she is wont to lead others, that he might fall the greater depth; he died in a land, and at a time, that could afford him little comfort in his illness, when the danger of being no more heard from stared his companions in the face, each one himself having need of

sympathy, which was the cause why they neither gave him companionship nor visited him, as otherwise they would have done.

Some were glad.

It was decided to conceal what had happened, lest the Indians might venture on an attack when they should learn that he whom they feared was no longer opposed to them.

So soon as death had taken place, the body was put secretly in a house, where it remained three days: thence it was taken by night to the gate of the town and buried within. The Indians having seen him ill, finding him no longer, suspected the reason; and passing by where he lay, they observed the ground loose and looking about talked among themselves. This coming to the knowledge of Luís de Moscosco he ordered the corpse to be taken up at night, and among the shawls that enshrouded it having cast abundance of sand, it was taken out in a canoe and committed to the middle of the stream.

Down, down, this solitary sperm, down into the liquid, the formless, the insatiable belly of sleep; down among the fishes: there was one called bagre, the third part of which was head, with gills from end to end, and along the sides were great spines, like very sharp awls; there were some in the river that weighed from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pounds. There were some in the shape of barbel; another like bream, with the head of a hake, having a color between red and brown. There was likewise a kind called peel-fish, the snout a cubit in length, the upper lip being shaped like a shovel. Others were like a shad. There was one called pereó the Indians sometimes brought, the size of a hog and had rows of teeth above and below.

Luís de Moscosco ordered the property of the Governor to be sold at public cry. It consisted of two male and three female slaves, three horses, and seven hundred swine. From that time forward most of the people owned and raised hogs.

### 3. NARRATIVE ESSAYS

## A Daring Deed

MARK TWAIN

WHEN I RETURNED to the pilot-house St. Louis was gone, and I was lost. Here was a piece of river which was all down in my book, but I could make neither head nor tail of it: you understand, it was turned around. I had seen it when coming up-stream, but I had never faced about to see how it looked when it was behind me. My heart broke again, for it was plain that I had got to learn this troublesome river *both ways*.

The pilot-house was full of pilots, going down to "look at the river." What is called the "upper river" (the two hundred miles between St. Louis and Cairo, where the Ohio comes in) was low; and the Mississippi changes its channel so constantly that the pilots used to always find it necessary to run down to Cairo to take a fresh look, when their boats were to lie in port a week; that is, when the water was at a low stage. A deal of this "looking at the river" was done by poor fellows who seldom had a berth, and whose only hope of getting one lay in their being always freshly posted and therefore ready to drop into the shoes of some reputable pilot, for a single trip, on account of such pilot's sudden illness, or some other necessity. And a good many of them constantly ran up and down inspecting the river, not because they ever really hoped to get a berth,

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but because (they being guests of the boat) it was cheaper to "look at the river" than stay ashore and pay board. In time these fellows grew dainty in their tastes, and only intested boats that had an established reputation for setting good tables. All visiting pilots were useful, for they were always ready and willing, winter or summer, night or day, to go out in the yawl and help buoy the channel or assist the boat's pilots in any way they could. They were likewise welcomed because all pilots are tireless talkers, when gathered together, and as they talk only about the river they are always understood and are always interesting. Your true pilot cares nothing about anything on earth but the river, and his pride in his occupation surpasses the pride of kings.

We had a fine company of these river inspectors along this trip. There were eight or ten, and there was abundance of room for them in our great pilothouse. Two or three of them wore polished silk hats, elaborate shirt-fronts, diamond breast-pins, kid gloves, and patent-leather boots. They were choice in their English, and bore themselves with a dignity proper to men of solid means and prodigious reputation as pilots. The others were more or less loosely clad, and wore upon their heads tall felt cones that were suggestive of the days of the Commonwealth.

I was a cipher in this august company, and felt subdued, not to say torpid. I was not even of sufficient consequence to assist at the wheel when it was necessary to put the tiller hard down in a hurry; the guest that stood nearest did that when occasion required—and this was pretty much all the time, because of the crookedness of the channel and the scant water. I stood in a corner; and the talk I listened to took the hope all out of me. One visitor said to another:

"Jim, how did you run Plum Point, coming up?"

"It was in the night, there, and I ran it the way one of the boys on the *Diana* told me; started out about fifty yards above the wood-pile on the false point, and held on the cabin under

Plum Point till I raised the reef—quarter less twain—then straightened up for the middle bar till I got well abreast the old one-limbed cottonwood in the bend, then got my stern on the cottonwood, and head on the low place above the point, and came through a-booming—nine and a half.”

“Pretty square crossing, an’t it?”

“Yes, but the upper bar’s working down fast.”

Another pilot spoke up and said:

“I had better water than that, and ran it lower down; started out from the false point—mark twain—raised the second reef abreast the big snag in the bend, and had quarter less twain.”

One of the gorgeous ones remarked:

“I don’t want to find fault with your leadsmen, but that’s a good deal of water for Plum Point, it seems to me.”

There was an approving nod all around as this quiet snub dropped on the boaster and “settled” him. And so they went on talk-talk-talking. Meantime, the thing that was running in my mind was, “Now, if my ears hear aright, I have not only to get the names of all the towns and islands and bends, and so on, by heart, but I must even get up a warm personal acquaintanceship with every old snag and one-limbed cottonwood and obscure wood-pile that ornaments the banks of this river for twelve hundred miles; and more than that, I must actually know where these things are in the dark, unless these guests are gifted with eyes that can pierce through two miles of solid blackness. I wish the piloting business was in Jericho and I had never thought of it.”

At dusk Mr. Bixby tapped the big bell three times (the signal to land), and the captain emerged from his drawing-room in the forward end of the “texas,” and looked up inquiringly. Mr. Bixby said:

“We will lay up here all night, captain.”

“Very well, sir.”

That was all. The boat came to shore and was tied up for the night. It seemed to me a fine thing that the pilot could do as

he pleased, without asking so grand a captain's permission. I took my supper and went immediately to bed, discouraged by my day's observations and experiences. My late voyage's note-book was but a confusion of meaningless names. It had tangled me all up in a knot every time I had looked at it in the daytime. I now hoped for respite in sleep; but no, it reveled all through my head till sunrise again, a frantic and tireless nightmare.

Next morning I felt pretty rusty and low-spirited. We went booming along, taking a good many chances, for we were anxious to "get out of the river" (as getting out to Cairo was called) before night should overtake us. But Mr. Bixby's partner, the other pilot, presently grounded the boat, and we lost so much time getting her off that it was plain the darkness would overtake us a good long way above the mouth. This was a great misfortune, especially to certain of our visiting pilots, whose boats would have to wait for their return, no matter how long that might be. It sobered the pilot-house talk a good deal. Coming up-stream, pilots did not mind low water or any kind of darkness; nothing stopped them but fog. But down-stream work was different; a boat was too nearly helpless, with a stiff current pushing behind her; so it was not customary to run down-stream at night in low water.

There seemed to be one small hope, however: if we could get through the intricate and dangerous Hat Island crossing before night, we could venture the rest, for we would have plainer sailing and better water. But it would be insanity to attempt Hat Island at night. So there was a deal of looking at watches all the rest of the day, and a constant ciphering upon the speed we were making; Hat Island was the eternal subject; sometimes hope was high and sometimes we were delayed in a bad crossing, and down it went again. For hours all hands lay under the burden of this suppressed excitement; it was even communicated to me, and I got to feeling so solicitous about Hat Island, and under such an awful pressure of responsibility,

that I wished I might have five minutes on shore to draw a good, full, relieving breath, and start over again. We were standing no regular watches. Each of our pilots ran such portions of the river as he had run when coming up-stream, because of his greater familiarity with it; but both remained in the pilot-house constantly.

An hour before sunset Mr. Bixby took the wheel, and Mr. W. stepped aside. For the next thirty minutes every man held his watch in his hand and was restless, silent, and uneasy. At last somebody said, with a doomful sigh:

"Well, yonder's Hat Island—and we can't make it."

All the watches closed with a snap, everybody sighed and muttered something about its being "too bad, too bad—ah, if we could *only* have got here half an hour sooner!" and the place was thick with the atmosphere of disappointment. Some started to go out, but loitered, hearing no bell-tap to land. The sun dipped behind the horizon, the boat went on. Inquiring looks passed from one guest to another; and one who had his hand on the door-knob and had turned it, waited, then presently took away his hand and let the knob turn back again. We bore steadily down the bend. More looks were exchanged, and nods of surprised admiration—but no words. Insensibly the men drew together behind Mr. Bixby, as the sky darkened and one or two dim stars came out. The dead silence and sense of waiting became oppressive. Mr. Bixby pulled the cord, and two deep, mellow notes from the big bell floated off on the night. Then a pause, and one more note was struck. The watchman's voice followed, from the hurricane-deck:

"Labboard lead, there! Stabboard lead!"

The cries of the leadsmen began to rise out of the distance, and were gruffly repeated by the word-passers on the hurricane-deck.

"M-a-r-k three! M-a-r-k three! Quarter-less-three! Half twain! Quarter twain! M-a-r-k twain! Quarter-less—"

Mr. Bixby pulled two bell-ropes, and was answered by faint

jinglings far below in the engine-room, and our speed slackened. The steam began to whistle through the gauge-cocks. The cries of the leadsmen went on—and it is a weird sound, always, in the night. Every pilot in the lot was watching now, with fixed eyes, and talking under his breath. Nobody was calm and easy but Mr. Bixby. He would put his wheel down and stand on a spoke, and as the steamer swung into her (to me) utterly invisible marks—for we seemed to be in the midst of a wide and gloomy sea—he would meet and fasten her there. Out of the murmur of half-audible talk, one caught a coherent sentence now and then—such as:

“There; she’s over the first reef all right!”

After a pause, another subdued voice:

“Her stern’s coming down just *exactly* right, by *George!*”

“Now she’s in the marks; over she goes!”

Somebody else muttered:

“Oh, it was done beautiful—*beautiful!*”

Now the engines were stopped altogether, and we drifted with the current. Not that I could see the boat drift, for I could not, the stars being all gone by this time. This drifting was the dismalest work; it held one’s heart still. Presently I discovered a blacker gloom than that which surrounded us. It was the head of the island. We were closing right down upon it. We entered its deeper shadow, and so imminent seemed the peril that I was likely to suffocate; and I had the strongest impulse to do *something*, anything, to save the vessel. But still Mr. Bixby stood by his wheel, silent, intent as a cat, and all the pilots stood shoulder to shoulder at his back.

“She’ll not make it!” somebody whispered.

The water grew shoaler and shoaler, by the leadsmen’s cries, till it was down to:

“Eight-and-a-half! E-i-g-h-t feet! E-i-g-h-t feet! Seven-and—”

Mr. Bixby said warningly through his speaking-tube to the engineer:

“Stand by, now!”

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Seven-and-a-half! Seven feet! Six-and—"

We touched bottom! Instantly Mr. Bixby set a lot of bells ringing, shouted through the tube, "*Now*, let her have it—every ounce you've got!" then to his partner, "Put her hard down! snatch her! snatch her!" The boat rasped and ground her way through the sand, hung upon the apex of disaster a single tremendous instant, and then over she went! And such a shout as went up at Mr. Bixby's back never loosened the roof of a pilot-house before!

There was no more trouble after that. Mr. Bixby was a hero that night; and it was some little time, too, before his exploit ceased to be talked about by river-men.

Fully to realize the marvelous precision required in laying the great steamer in her marks in that murky waste of water, one should know that not only must she pick her intricate way through snags and blind reefs, and then shave the head of the island so closely as to brush the overhanging foliage with her stern, but at one place she must pass almost within arm's reach of a sunken and invisible wreck that would snatch the hull timbers from under her if she should strike it, and destroy a quarter of a million dollars' worth of steamboat and cargo in five minutes, and maybe a hundred and fifty human lives into the bargain.

The last remark I heard that night was a compliment to Mr. Bixby, uttered in soliloquy and with unction by one of our guests. He said:

'By the Shadow of Death, but he's a lightning pilot!'

#### COMMENT

A narrative essay such as "A Daring Deed" has much in common with those short stories in which the focus of interest is on the action. Like those stories, it is organized around a series of related events

in which the drama and excitement are either obvious (as in this essay and "A Raid in the Desert") or are discovered when the events are seen from a special point of view (as in "A Visit to Grandpa's"). Also like those stories, it presents a problem running through the series and reaching a definite climax of action and interest. Both the essay and the short stories represent and interpret human experience in terms of the actions they depict.

The essay and the stories differ, however, in a number of important ways. Though the dividing line between them is sometimes difficult to determine, we may say that in general the short stories are more complex, more tightly integrated, and more rich and varied in their meanings. Usually (though certainly not always) they tell us more about the characters, presenting them more as individuals and less as types and showing their human contradictions and inconsistencies. In the best short stories, moreover, these contradictions and inconsistencies are not simply "true" facts included for the sake of realism but lying somewhat outside the pattern of the narrative; rather, after generating a pleasing tension by their apparent threat to the unity of the pattern, they are integrated into it: they are made the sources of part of the action or their very "outsideness" turns out to be a significant part of the problem and the interpretation of life presented in the work. Often the short stories will give more attention to the total "situation"—the complicated relationships of cause and effect among the characters, setting, and actions. Thus, in organizing more details they are likely to be more interesting as works of art and more "symbolical" of the universal patterns of life in terms of particular objects and events.<sup>1</sup>

In "A Daring Deed" the emphasis falls upon the sequence of events and the merely physical problems they involve. The design and meaning of the essay are simple. Interest depends more upon the intrinsic drama of the material than upon the aesthetic appeal of the organization, though the latter, as we shall see in a moment, is great. To get the most excitement out of the material, Twain has relied for the most part on three devices: the point of view, the

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<sup>1</sup> This point is discussed in greater detail in the introductory comment to the third section, "Surface and Symbol," of *The Story*, edited by Mark Schorer. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950

order of presentation, and the level of language usage. The most important of these is the point of view. The events, exciting as they are by themselves, are probably more exciting when seen through the eyes of a boy, whose character is developed just enough to permit the inclusion of some details (particularly those of the glorification of riverboat life by the children in the towns along the Mississippi and the glamor of the machinery and the sumptuous saloon) and the rejection of others which would not interest the boy (the business details, the essential provinciality, egoism, and foolhardiness of the pilots).<sup>2</sup> We perceive the events only through the boy, and our response to them is conditioned by his: we may not interpret and evaluate the events as he does, but our interpretations and evaluations depend on his.

The narrative opens with a statement of the general problem. Young Mark Twain, the observer-narrator, must learn the Mississippi River both ways, and the job seems too much for him. He is bewildered and discouraged; only his eagerness to become one of the "gorgeous ones" keeps him going. Their presence in the pilothouse and their lordly knowledge, so different from his ignorance, further define and emphasize the point of view, and their remarks serve the useful function of supplying us with information without requiring a shift in the point of view (which, since the point of view is so important, would seriously disrupt the unity of the work and diffuse our interest). The "gorgeous ones" also supply the particular problem which (a) brings about the events with which the narrative is concerned, (b) helps to integrate the essay, and (c) gives a dramatic and significant illustration of the general problem. Some of them must get to Cairo quickly; but the boat has been held up, and only a pilot who knows the river well enough to dare to pass deadly Hat Island at night can get them there. (As an illustration of how details can "work upon" each other in a well-integrated essay, this feat is made all the more impressive for us by our memory of young Twain's difficulties with learning the river *by day*.) The "gorgeous

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<sup>2</sup> Strictly speaking, the events are not seen through the eyes of the boy but through the memories of the man the boy became. But the man's remarks on the observations of the boy emphasize the boy's feelings and the limitations of his position as an observer. For this reason no distinction has been made between the man and boy in this comment.



ones' " problem becomes Mr. Bixby's. But above all, it becomes young Twain's, for though he does not have to take the wheel, this incident is part of his preparation for the day when he will. Indeed, some short story writers such as Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, or Joseph Conrad, who are greatly interested in the problems of boys and young men preparing for manhood, might develop a similar series of events into a searching character study. Such a story would have to include many things omitted here, notably the character and motives of Mr. Bixby.

Once the problems are laid out, the events move more swiftly. The point of view is used to leave out many things that might slow the pace. The essay leaps over the events of the first day and night and most of the second day until darkness begins to fall. Suddenly we are given many details, yet the pace seems to quicken, for the essay builds up excitement through the immediacy which the colloquial language has helped to establish. Using the boy's ignorance to make the details more fearful, the narrative presents in quick succession the gathering darkness, the pilots clustering inward behind the wheel, the growing silence, the rushing together of the boat and the island, and the leadsman's cries, which measure off the steps toward disaster and ring so starkly and strangely against the silence and the easy, familiar language that went before. The climax is intensified by the flurry of sounds and actions, at first confusing and dismaying to the boy and to us. The order of the events, so skillfully managed up to this moment, now reaches its apex. For, after a pause, during which we can get our breaths back and take in all that has happened, a pause which Twain uses to fill in a few more details which would have slowed the rush of events but are here necessary for our appreciation of the ending,—after this, the essay reaches its brilliant conclusion. Like the ending of Tate's essay on Jackson, the final quotation summarizes, interprets, and appraises all that has gone before it. Within the conditions of this narrative essay it would be difficult to improve upon such art.

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## A Raid in the Desert

T. E. LAWRENCE

IN THE MORNING we determined on another visit to the line, for fuller trial of the automatic mine-action which had half-failed at Aba el Naam. Old Dakhil-Allah said that he would come with me himself on this trip; the project of looting a train had tempted him. With us went some forty of the Juheina, who seemed to me stouter men than the high-bred Ateiba. However, one of the chiefs of the Ateiba, Sultan el Abbud, a boon friend of Abdulla and Shakir, refused to be left behind. This good-tempered but hare-brained fellow, sheikh of a poor section of the tribe, had had more horses killed under him in battle than any other Ateibi warrior. He was about twenty-six and a great rider; full of quips and fond of practical jokes, very noisy: tall and strong, with a big, square head, wrinkled forehead, and deep-set bright eyes. A young moustache and beard hid his ruthless jaw and the wide, straight mouth, with white teeth gleaming and locked like a wolf's.

We took a machine-gun and its soldier-crew of thirteen with us, to settle our train when caught. Shakir, with his grave courtesy to the Emir's guest, set us on our road for the first half-hour. This time we kept to the Wadi Ais almost to its junction with Hamdh, finding it very green and full of grazing, since it had flooded twice already in this winter. At last we bore off

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From *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, by T. E. Lawrence. Copyright 1926. 1935 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

to the right over a ditch on to a flat, and there slept in the sand, rather distressed by a shower of rain which sent little rills over the ground about midnight: but the next morning was bright and hot, and we rode into the huge plain where the three great valleys, Tubja, Ais and Jizil, flowed into and became one with Hamdh. The course of the main stream was overgrown by asla wood, just as at Abu Zereibat, with the same leprous bed of hummocky sand-blisters: but the thicket was only two hundred yards broad, and beyond it the plain with its grained intricacy of shallow torrent-beds stretched for yet further miles. At noon we halted by a place like a wilderness garden, waist deep in juicy grass and flowers, upon which our happy camels gorged themselves for an hour and then sat down, full and astonished.

The day seemed to be hotter and hotter: the sun drew close, and scorched us without intervening air. The clean, sandy soil was so baked that my bare feet could not endure it, and I had to walk in sandals, to the amusement of the Juheina, whose thick soles were proof even against slow fire. As the afternoon passed on the light became dim, but the heat steadily increased with an oppression and sultriness which took me by surprise. I kept turning my head to see if some mass was not just behind me, shutting off the air.

There had been long rolls of thunder all morning in the hills, and the two peaks, Serd and Jasim, were wrapped in folds of dark blue and yellow vapour, which looked motionless and substantial. At last I saw that part of the yellow cloud off Serd was coming slowly against the wind in our direction, raising scores of dust devils before its feet.

The cloud was nearly as high as the hill. While it approached, two dust-spouts, tight and symmetrical chimneys, advanced, one on the right and one on the left of its front. Dakhil-Allah responsibly looked ahead and to each side for shelter, but saw none. He warned me that the storm would be heavy.

When it got near, the wind, which had been scorching our faces with its hot breathlessness, changed suddenly; and, after waiting a moment, blew bitter cold and damp upon our backs. It also increased greatly in violence, and at the same time the sun disappeared, blotted out by thick rags of yellow air over our heads. We stood in a horrible light, ochreous and fitful. The brown wall of cloud from the hills was now very near, rushing changelessly upon us with a loud grinding sound. Three minutes later it struck, wrapping about us a blanket of dust and stinging grains of sand, twisting and turning in violent eddies, and yet advancing eastward at the speed of a strong gale.

We had put our camels' backs to the storm, to march before it: but these internal whirling winds tore our tightly-held cloaks from our hands, filled our eyes, and robbed us of all sense of direction by turning our camels right or left from their course. Sometimes they were blown completely round: once we clashed helplessly together in a vortex, while large bushes, tufts of grass, and even a small tree were torn up by the roots in dense waves of the soil about them, and driven against us, or blown over our heads with dangerous force. We were never blinded—it was always possible to see for seven or eight feet to each side—but it was risky to look out, as, in addition to the certain sand-blast, we never knew if we should not meet a flying tree, a rush of pebbles, or a spout of grass-laden dust.

This storm lasted for eighteen minutes, and then leaped forward from us as suddenly as it had come. Our party was scattered over a square mile or more, and before we could rally, while we, our clothes and our camels were yet smothered in dust, yellow and heavy with it from head to foot, down burst torrents of thick rain and muddied us to the skin. The valley began to run in splashes of water, and Dakhil-Allah urged us across it quickly. The wind chopped once more, this time to the north, and the rain came driving before it in harsh sheets of spray. It beat through our woollen cloaks in a moment, and

moulded them and our shirts to our bodies, and chilled us to the bone.

We reached the hill-barrier in mid-afternoon, but found the valley bare and shelterless, colder than ever. After riding up it for three or four miles we halted, and climbed a great crag to see the railway which, they said, lay just beyond. On the height the wind was so terrible that we could not cling to the wet slippery rocks against the slapping and bellying of our cloaks and skirts. I took mine off, and climbed the rest of the way half-naked, more easily, and hardly colder than before. But the effort proved useless, the air being too thick for observation. So I worked down, cut and bruised, to the others; and dressed numbly. On our way back we suffered the only casualty of this trip. Sultan had insisted on coming with us, and his Ateibi servant, who must follow him though he had no head for heights, slipped in one bad place with a fall of forty feet to the stones, and plunged down headlong.

When we got back my hands and feet were too broken to serve me longer, and I lay down and shivered for an hour or so while the others buried the dead man in a side valley. On their return they met suddenly an unknown rider on a camel, crossing their track. He fired at them. They fired back, snap-shooting through the rain, and the evening swallowed him. This was disquieting, for surprise was our main ally, and we could only hope that he would not return to warn the Turks that there were raiders in the neighbourhood.

After the heavy camels with the explosives caught us, we mounted again to get closer to the line; but we had no more than started when brazenly down the visible wind in the misted valley came the food-call of Turkish bugles. Dakhil-Allah thrust his ear forward in the direction of the sound, and understood that over there lay Madahrij, the small station below which we meant to operate. So we steered on the hateful noise, hateful because it spoke of supper and of tents, whereas we were shelterless, and on such a night could not hope to make

ourselves a fire and bake bread from the flour and water in our saddle-bags, and consequently must go hungry.

We did not reach the railway till after ten o'clock at night, in conditions of invisibility which made it futile to choose a machine-gun position. At random I pitched upon kilometre 1,121 from Damascus for the mine. It was a complicated mine, with a central trigger to fire simultaneous charges thirty yards apart: and we hoped in this way to get the locomotive whether it was going north or south. Burying the mine took four hours, for the rain had caked the surface and rotted it. Our feet made huge tracks on the flat and on the bank, as though a school of elephants had been dancing there. To hide these marks was out of the question, so we did the other thing, trampling about for hundreds of yards, even bringing up our camels to help, until it looked as though half an army had crossed the valley, and the mine-place was no better and no worse than the rest. Then we went back a safe distance, behind some miserable mounds, and cowered down in the open, waiting for day. The cold was intense. Our teeth chattered, and we trembled and hissed involuntarily, while our hands drew in like claws.

At dawn the clouds had disappeared, and a red sun promised, over the very fine broken hills beyond the railway. Old Dakhil-Allah, our active guide and leader in the night, now took general charge, and sent us out singly and in pairs to all the approaches of our hiding-place. He himself crawled up the ridge before us to watch events upon the railway through his glasses. I was praying that there might be no events till the sun had gained power and warmed me, for the shivering fit still jerked me about. However, soon the sun was up and unveiled, and things improved. My clothes were drying. By noon it was nearly as hot as the day before, and we were gasping for shade, and thicker clothes, against the sun.

First of all, though, at six in the morning, Dakhil-Allah reported a trolley, which came from the south, and passed over

the mine harmlessly—to our satisfaction, for we had not laid a beautiful compound charge for just four men and a sergeant. Then sixty men sallied out from Madahrij. This disturbed us till we saw that they were to replace five telegraph poles blown down by the storm of the afternoon before. Then at seventy-three a patrol of eleven men went down the line: two inspecting each rail minutely, three marching each side of the bank looking for cross-tracks, and one, presumably the N.C.O., walking grandly along the metals with nothing to do.

However, to-day, they did find something, when they crossed our footprints about kilometre 1,121. They concentrated there upon the permanent way, stared at it, stamped, wandered up and down, scratched the ballast; and thought exhaustively. The time of their search passed slowly for us: but the mine was well hidden, so that eventually they wandered on contentedly towards the south, where they met the Hedja patrol, and both parties sat together in the cool shade of a bridge-arch, and rested after their labours. Meanwhile the train, a heavy train, came along from the south. Nine of its laden trucks held women and children from Medina, civil refugees being deported to Syria, with their household stuff. It ran over the charges without explosion. As artist I was furious; as commander deeply relieved: women and children were not proper spoil.

The Juheina raced to the crest where Dakhil-Allah and myself lay hidden, when they heard the train coming, to see it blown in pieces. Our stone headwork had been built for two, so that the hill-top, a bald cone conspicuously opposite the working party, became suddenly and visibly populous. This was too much for the nerves of the Turks, who fled back into Madahrij, and thence, at about five thousand yards, opened a brisk rifle fire. They must also have telephoned to Hedja, which soon came to life: but since the nearest outpost on that side was about six miles off, its garrisons held their fire, and

contented themselves with selections on the bugle, played all day. The distance made it grave and beautiful.

Even the rifle shooting did us no harm; but the disclosure of ourselves was unfortunate. At Madahrij were two hundred men, and at Hedia eleven hundred, and our retreat was by the plain of Hamdh on which Hedia stood. Their mounted troops might sally out and cut our rear. The Juheina had good camels, and so were safe; but the machine-gun was a captured German sledge-Maxim: a heavy load for its tiny mule. The servers were on foot, or on other mules: their top speed would be only six miles an hour, and their fighting value, with a single gun, not high. So after a council of war we rode back with them half-way through the hills, and there dismissed them, with fifteen Juheina, towards Wadi Ais.

This made us mobile, and Dakhil-Allah, Sultan, Mohammed and I rode back with the rest of our party for another look at the line. The sunlight was now terrific, with faint gusts of scorching heat blowing up at us out of the south. We took refuge about ten o'clock under some spacious trees, where we baked bread and lunched, in nice view of the line, and shaded from the worst of the sun. About us, over the gravel, circles of pale shadow from the crisping leaves ran to and fro, like grey, indeterminate bugs, as the slender branches dipped reluctantly in the wind. Our picnic annoyed the Turks, who shot or trumpeted at us incessantly through the middle day and till evening, while we slept in turn.

About five they grew quiet, and we mounted and rode slowly across the open valley towards the railway. Madahrij revived in a paroxysm of fire, and all the trumpets of Hedia blared again. The monkey-pleasure of pulling large and impressive legs was upon us. So when we reached the line we made our camels kneel down beside it, and, led by Dakhil-Allah as Imam, performed a sunset prayer quietly between the rails. It was probably the first prayer of the Juheina for a year or so, and I was



a novice, but from a distance we passed muster, and the Turks stopped shooting in bewilderment. This was the first and last time I ever prayed in Arabia as a Moslem.

After the prayer it was still much too light to hide our actions: so we sat round on the embankment smoking, till dusk, when I tried to go off by myself and dig up the mine, to learn, for service on the next occasion, why it had failed. However, the Juheina were as interested in that as I. Along they came in a swarm and clustered over the metals during the search. They brought my heart into my throat, for it took me an hour to find just where the mine was hidden. Laying a Garland mine was shaky work, but scrabbling in pitch darkness up and down a hundred yards of railway, feeling for a hair-trigger buried in the ballast, seemed, at the time, an almost uninsurable occupation. The two charges connected with it were so powerful that they would have rooted out seventy yards of track; and I saw visions of suddenly blowing up, not only myself, but my whole force, every moment. To be sure, such a feat would have properly completed the bewilderment of the Turks!

At last I found it, and ascertained by touch that the lock had sunk one-sixteenth of an inch, due to bad setting by myself or because the ground had subsided after the rain. I firmed it into its place. Then, to explain ourselves plausibly to the enemy, we began blowing up things to the north of the mine. We found a little four-arch bridge and put it into the air. Afterwards we turned to rails and cut about two hundred: and while the men were laying and lighting charges I taught Mohammed to climb a splintery pole; together we cut the wires, and with their purchase dragged down other poles. All was done at speed, for we feared lest Turks come after us: and when our explosive work was finished we ran back like hares to our camels, mounted them, and trotted without interruption down the windy valley once more to the plain of Hamdh.

There we were in safety, but old Dakhil-Allah was too pleased with the mess we had made of the line to go soberly.

When we were on the sandy flat he beat up his camel into a canter, and we pounded madly after him through the colourless moonlight. The going was perfect, and we never drew rein for three hours, till we over-rode our machine-gun and its escort camping on the road home. The soldiers heard our rout yelling through the night, thought us enemies of sorts, and let fly at us with their Maxim: but it jammed after half a belt, and they, being tailors from Mecca, were unhandy with it. So no one was hurt, and we captured them mirthfully.

In the morning we slept lazily long, and breakfasted at Rubiaan, the first well in Wadi Ais. Afterwards we were smoking and talking, about to bring in the camels, when suddenly we felt the distant shock of a great explosion behind us on the railway. We wondered if the mine had been discovered or had done its duty. Two scouts had been left to report, and we rode slowly; for them, and because the rain two days ago had brought down Wadi Ais once more in flood, and its bed was all flecked over with shallow pools of soft, grey water, between banks of silvery mud, which the current had rippled into fish-scales. The warmth of the sun made the surface like fine glue, on which our helpless camels sprawled comically, or went down with a force and completeness surprising in such dignified beasts. Their tempers were roughened each time by our fit of mirth.

The sunlight, the easy march and the expectation of the scouts' news made everything gay, and we developed social virtues: but our limbs, stiff from the exertions of yesterday, and our abundant food, determined us to fall short of Abu Markha for the night. So, near sunset, we chose a dry terrace in the valley to sleep upon. I rode up it first and turned and looked at the men reined in below me in a group, upon their bay camels like copper statues in the fierce light of the setting sun; they seemed to be burning with an inward flame.

Before bread was baked the scouts arrived, to tell us that at dawn the Turks had been busy round our damages; and a little

later a locomotive with trucks of rails, and a crowded labour gang on top, had come up from Hedia, and had exploded the mine fore and aft of its wheels. This was everything we had hoped, and we rode back to Abdulla's camp on a morning of perfect springtime, in a singing company. We had proved that a well-laid mine would fire; and that a well-laid mine was difficult even for its maker to discover. These points were of importance; for Newcombe, Garland and Hornby were now out upon the railway, harrying it: and mines were the best weapon yet discovered to make the regular working of their trains costly and uncertain for our Turkish enemy.

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## A Visit to Grandpa's

D Y L A N T H O M A S

IN THE MIDDLE of the night I woke from a dream full of whips and lariats as long as serpents, and runaway coaches on mountain passes, and wide, windy gallops over cactus fields, and I heard the old man in the next room crying, 'Gee-up!' and 'Whoa!' and trotting his tongue on the roof of his mouth.

It was the first time I had stayed in grandpa's house. The floorboards had squeaked like mice as I climbed into bed, and the mice between the walls had creaked like wood as though another visitor was walking on them. It was a mild summer night, but curtains had flapped and branches beaten against the window. I had pulled the sheets over my head, and soon was roaring and riding in a book.

'Whoa there, my beauties!' cried grandpa. His voice sounded very young and loud, and his tongue had powerful hooves, and he made his bedroom into a great meadow. I thought I would see if he was ill, or had set his bedclothes on fire, for my mother had said that he lit his pipe under the blankets, and had warned me to run to his help if I smelt smoke in the night. I went on tiptoe through the darkness to his bedroom door, brushing against the furniture and upsetting a candlestick with a thump. When I saw there was a light in the room

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From *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*, by Dylan Thomas, published by New Directions, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York City. Copyright 1940 by New Directions.

I felt frightened, and as I opened the door I heard grandpa shout, 'Gee-up!' as loudly as a bull with a megaphone.

He was sitting straight up in bed and rocking from side to side as though the bed were on a rough road; the knotted edges of the counterpane were his reins; his invisible horses stood in a shadow beyond the bedside candle. Over a white flannel nightshirt he was wearing a red waistcoat with walnut-sized brass buttons. The over-filled bowl of his pipe smouldered among his whiskers like a little, burning hayrick on a stick. At the sight of me, his hands dropped from the reins and lay blue and quiet, the bed stopped still on a level road, he muffled his tongue into silence, and the horses drew softly up.

'Is there anything the matter, grandpa?' I asked, though the clothes were not on fire. His face in the candlelight looked like a ragged quilt pinned upright on the black air and patched all over with goat-beards.

He stared at me mildly. Then he blew down his pipe, scattering the sparks and making a high, wet dogwhistle of the stem, and shouted: 'Ask no questions.'

After a pause, he said slyly: 'Do you ever have nightmares, boy?'

I said: 'No.'

'Oh, yes, you do,' he said.

I said I was woken by a voice that was shouting to horses.

'What did I tell you?' he said. 'You eat too much. Who ever heard of horses in a bedroom?'

He fumbled under his pillow, brought out a small, tinkling bag, and carefully untied its strings. He put a sovereign in my hand, and said 'Buy a cake.' I thanked him and wished him good night.

As I closed my bedroom door, I heard his voice crying loudly and gaily, 'Gee-up! gee-up!' and the rocking of the travelling bed.

In the morning I woke from a dream of fiery horses on a plain that was littered with furniture, and of large, cloudy

men who rode six horses at a time and whipped them with burning bed-clothes. Grandpa was at breakfast, dressed in deep black. After breakfast he said, 'There was a terrible loud wind last night,' and sat in his arm-chair by the hearth to make clay balls for the fire. Later in the morning he took me for a walk, through Johnstown village and into the fields on the Llanstephan road.

A man with a whippet said, 'There's a nice morning, Mr. Thomas,' and when he had gone, leanly as his dog, into the short-treed green wood he should not have entered because of the notices, grandpa said: 'There, do you hear what he called you? Mister!'

We passed by small cottages, and all the men who leant on the gates congratulated grandpa on the fine morning. We passed through the wood full of pigeons, and their wings broke the branches as they rushed to the tops of the trees. Among the soft, contented voices and the loud, timid flying, grandpa said, like a man calling across a field: 'If you heard those old birds in the night, you'd wake me up and say there were horses in the trees.'

We walked back slowly, for he was tired, and the lean man stalked out of the forbidden wood with a rabbit held as gently over his arm as a girl's arm in a warm sleeve.

On the last day but one of my visit I was taken to Llanstephan in a governess cart pulled by a short, weak pony. Grandpa might have been driving a bison, so tightly he held the reins, so ferociously cracked the long whip, so blasphemously shouted warning to boys who played in the road, so stoutly stood with his gaitered legs apart and cursed the demon strength and wilfulness of his tottering pony.

'Look out, boy!' he cried when we came to each corner, and pulled and tugged and jerked and sweated and waved his whip like a rubber sword. And when the pony had crept miserably round each corner, grandpa turned to me with a sighing smile: 'We weathered that one, boy.'

When we came to Llanstephan village at the top of the hill, he left the cart by the 'Edwinsford Arms' and patted the pony's muzzle and gave it sugar, saying: 'You're a weak little pony, Jim, to pull big men like us.'

He had strong beer and I had lemonade, and he paid Mrs. Edwinsford with a sovereign out of the tinkling bag; she inquired after his health, and he said that Llangadock was better for the tubes. We went to look at the churchyard and the sea, and sat in the wood called the Sticks, and stood on the concert platform in the middle of the wood where visitors sang on midsummer nights and, year by year, the innocent of the village was elected mayor. Grandpa paused at the churchyard and pointed over the iron gate at the angelic headstones and the poor wooden crosses. 'There's no sense in lying there,' he said.

We journeyed back furiously: Jim was a bison again.

I woke late on my last morning, out of dreams where the Llanstephan sea carried bright sailing-boats as long as liners; and heavenly choirs in the Sticks, dressed in bards' robes and brass-buttoned waistcoats, sang in a strange Welsh to the departing sailors. Grandpa was not at breakfast; he rose early. I walked in the fields with a new sling, and shot at the Towy gulls and the rooks in the parsonage trees. A warm wind blew from the summer points of the weather; a morning mist climbed from the ground and floated among the trees and hid the noisy birds; in the mist and the wind my pebbles flew lightly up like hailstones in a world on its head. The morning passed without a bird falling.

I broke my sling and returned for the midday meal through the parson's orchard. Once, grandpa told me, the parson had bought three ducks at Carmarthen Fair and made a pond for them in the centre of the garden; but they waddled to the gutter under the crumbling doorsteps of the house, and swam and quacked there. When I reached the end of the orchard path, I looked through a hole in the hedge and saw that the

parson had made a tunnel through the rockery that was between the gutter and the pond and had set up a notice in plain writing: 'This way to the pond.'

The ducks were still swimming under the steps.

Grandpa was not in the cottage. I went into the garden, but grandpa was not staring at the fruit-trees. I called across to a man who leant on a spade in the field beyond the garden hedge: 'Have you seen my grandpa this morning?'

He did not stop digging and answered over his shoulder: 'I seen him in his fancy waistcoat.'

Griff, the barber, lived in the next cottage. I called to him through the open door: 'Mr. Griff, have you seen my grandpa?'

The barber came out in his shirtsleeves.

I said: 'He's wearing his best waistcoat.' I did not know if it was important, but grandpa wore his waistcoat only in the night.

'Has grandpa been to Llanstephan?' asked Mr. Griff anxiously.

'We went there yesterday in a little trap,' I said.

He hurried indoors and I heard him talking in Welsh, and he came out again with his white coat on, and he carried a striped and coloured walking-stick. He strode down the village street and I ran by his side.

When we stopped at the tailor's shop, he cried out, 'Dan!' and Dan Tailor stepped from his window where he sat like an Indian priest but wearing a derby hat. 'Dai Thomas has got his waistcoat on,' said Mr. Griff, 'and he's been to Llanstephan.'

As Dan Tailor searched for his overcoat, Mr. Griff was striding on. 'Will Evans,' he called outside the carpenter's shop, 'Dai Thomas has been to Llanstephan, and he's got his waistcoat on.'

'I'll tell Morgan now,' said the carpenter's wife out of the hammering, sawing darkness of the shop.



We called at the butcher's shop and Mr. Price's house, and Mr. Griff repeated his message like a town crier.

We gathered together in Johnstown square. Dan Tailor had his bicycle, Mr. Price his pony-trap. Mr. Griff, the butcher, Morgan Carpenter, and I climbed into the shaking trap, and we trotted off towards Carmarthen town. The tailor led the way, ringing his bell as though there were a fire or a robbery, and an old woman by the gate of a cottage at the end of the street ran inside like a pelted hen. Another woman waved a bright handkerchief.

'Where are we going?' I asked.

Grandpa's neighbours were as solemn as old men with black hats and jackets on the outskirts of a fair. Mr. Griff shook his head and mourned: 'I didn't expect this again from Dai Thomas.'

'Not after last time,' said Mr. Price sadly.

We trotted on, we crept up Constitution Hill, we rattled down into Lammas Street, and the tailor still rang his bell and a dog ran, squealing, in front of his wheels. As we clip-clopped over the cobbles that led down to the Towy bridge, I remembered grandpa's nightly noisy journeys that rocked the bed and shook the walls, and I saw his gay waistcoat in a vision and his patchwork head tufted and smiling in the candlelight. The tailor before us turned round on his saddle, his bicycle wobbled and skidded. 'I see Dai Thomas!' he cried.

The trap rattled on to the bridge, and I saw grandpa there; the buttons of his waistcoat shone in the sun, he wore his tight, black Sunday trousers and a tall, dusty hat I had seen in a cupboard in the attic, and he carried an ancient bag. He bowed to us. 'Good morning, Mr. Price,' he said, 'and Mr. Griff and Mr. Morgan and Mr. Evans.' To me, he said 'Good morning, boy.'

Mr. Griff pointed his coloured stick at him.

'And what do you think you are doing on Carmarthen bridge

in the middle of the afternoon,' he said sternly, 'with your best waistcoat and your old hat?'

Grandpa did not answer, but inclined his face to the river wind, so that his beard was set dancing and wagging as though he talked, and watched the coracle men move, like turtles, on the shore.

Mr. Griff raised his stunted barber's pole. 'And where do you think you are going,' he said, 'with your old black bag?'

Grandpa said: 'I am going to Llangadock to be buried.' And he watched the coracle shells slip into the water lightly, and the gulls complain over the fish-filled water as bitterly as Mr. Price complained:

'But you aren't dead yet, Dai Thomas.'

For a moment grandpa reflected, then: 'There's no sense in lying dead in Llanstephan,' he said. 'The ground is comfy in Llangadock; you can twitch your legs without putting them in the sea.'

His neighbours moved close to him. They said: 'You aren't dead, Mr. Thomas.'

'How can you be buried, then?'

'Nobody's going to bury you in Llanstephan.'

'Come on home, Mr. Thomas.'

'There's strong beer for tea.'

'And cake.'

But grandpa stood firmly on the bridge and clutched his bag to his side, and stared at the flowing river and the sky, like a prophet who has no doubt.

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## 4. DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS

### *The Dance of the Sprouting Corn*

D. H. LAWRENCE

PALE, DRY, BAKED earth, that blows into dust of fine sand. Low hills of baked pale earth, sinking heavily, and speckled sparsely with dark dots of cedar bushes. A river on the plain of drought, just a cleft of dark, reddish-brown water, almost a flood. And over all, the blue, uneasy, alkaline sky.

A pale, uneven, parched world, where a motorcar rocks and lurches and churns in sand. A world pallid with dryness, inhuman with a faint taste of alkali. Like driving in the bed of a great sea that dried up unthinkable ages ago, and now is drier than any other dryness, yet still reminiscent of the bottom of the sea, sandhills sinking, and straight, cracked mesas, like cracks in the dry-mud bottom of the sea.

So, the mud church standing discreetly outside, just outside the pueblo, not to see too much. And on its façade of mud, under the timbered mud-eaves, two speckled horses rampant, painted by the Indians, a red piebald and a black one.

Swish! Over the logs of the ditch-bridge, where brown water is flowing full. There below is the pueblo, dried mud like mud-pie houses, all squatting in a jumble, prepared to crumble into dust and be invisible, dust to dust returning, earth to earth.

That they don't crumble is the mystery. That these little squarish mud-heaps endure for centuries after centuries, while

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Greek marble tumbles asunder, and cathedrals totter, is the wonder. But then, the naked human hand with a bit of new soft mud is quicker than time, and defies the centuries.

Roughly the low, square, mud-pie houses make a wide street where all is naked earth save a doorway or a window with a pale-blue sash. At the end of the street, turn again into a parallel wide, dry street. And there, in the dry, oblong aridity, there tosses a small forest that is alive; and thud—thud—thud goes the drum, and the deep sound of men singing is like the deep sighing of the wind, in the depths of a wood.

You realize that you had heard the drum from the distance, also the deep, distant roar and boom of the singing, but that you had not heeded, as you don't heed the wind.

It all tosses like young, agile trees in a wind. This is the dance of the sprouting corn, and everybody holds a little, beating branch of green pine. Thud—thud—thud—thud—thud! goes the drum, heavily the men hop and hop and hop, sway, sway, sway, sway go the little branches of green pine. It tosses like a little forest, and the deep sound of men's singing is like the booming and tearing of a wind deep inside a forest. They are dancing the Spring Corn Dance.

This is the Wednesday after Easter, after Christ Risen and the corn germinated. They dance on Monday and on Tuesday. Wednesday is the third and last dance of this green resurrection.

You realize the long lines of dancers, and a solid cluster of men singing near the drum. You realize the intermittent black-and-white fantasy of the hopping Koshare, the jesters, the Delight-Makers. You become aware of the ripple of bells on the knee-garters of the dancers, a continual pulsing ripple of little bells; and of the sudden wild, whooping yells from near the drum. Then you become aware of the seed-like shudder of the gourd-rattles, as the dance changes, and the swaying of the tufts of green pine-twigs stuck behind the arms of all the dancing men, in the broad green arm-bands.

Gradually comes through to you the black, stable solidity of the dancing women, who poise like solid shadow, one woman behind each rippling, leaping male. The long, silky black hair of the women, streaming down their backs, and the equally long, streaming, gleaming hair of the males, loose over broad, naked, orange-brown shoulders.

Then the faces, the impassive, rather fat, golden-brown faces of the women, with eyes cast down, crowned above with the green tableta, like a flat tiara. Something strange and noble about the impassive, barefoot women in the short black cassocks, as they subtly tread the dance, scarcely moving, and yet edging rhythmically along, swaying from each hand the green spray of pine-twigs out—out—out—out, to the thud of the drum, immediately behind the leaping fox-skin of the men dancers. And all the emerald-green, painted tabletas, the flat wooden tiaras shaped like a castle gateway, rise steady and noble from the soft, slightly bowed heads of the women, held by a band under the chin. All the tabletas down the line, emerald green, almost steady, while the bright black heads of the men leap softly up and down, between.

Bit by bit you take it in. You cannot get a whole impression, save of some sort of wood tossing, a little forest of trees in motion, with gleaming black hair and gold-ruddy breasts that somehow do not destroy the illusion of forest.

When you look at the women, you forget the men. The bare-armed, bare-legged, barefoot women with streaming hair and lofty green tiaras, impassive, downward-looking faces, twigs swaying outwards from subtle, rhythmic wrists; women clad in the black, prehistoric short gown fastened over one shoulder, leaving the other shoulder bare, and showing at the arm-place a bit of pink or white undershirt; belted also round the waist with a woven woolen sash, scarlet and green on the hand-woven black cassock. The noble, slightly submissive bending of the tiara-ed head. The subtle measure of the bare, breathing, bird-like feet, that are flat, and seem to cleave to earth softly,

and softly lift away. The continuous outward swaying of the pine-sprays.

But when you look at the men, you forget the women. The men are naked to the waist, and ruddy-golden, and in the rhythmic, hopping leap of the dance their breasts shake downwards, as the strong, heavy body comes down, down, down, down, in the downward plunge of the dance. The black hair streams loose and living down their backs, the black brows are level, the black eyes look out unchanging from under the silky lashes. They are handsome, and absorbed with a deep rhythmic absorption, which still leaves them awake and aware. Down, down, down they drop, on the heavy, ceaseless leap of the dance, and the great necklaces of shell-cores spring on the naked breasts, the neck-shell flaps up and down, the short white kilt of woven stuff, with the heavy woollen embroidery, green and red and black, opens and shuts slightly to the strong lifting of the knees: the heavy whitish cords that hang from the kilt-band at the side sway and coil forever down the side of the right leg, down to the ankle, the bells on the red-woven garters under the knees ripple without end, and the feet, in buckskin boots furred round the ankle with a beautiful band of skunk fur, black with a white tip, come down with a lovely, heavy, soft precision, first one, then the other, dropping always plumb to earth. Slightly bending forward, a black gourd rattle in the right hand, a small green bough in the left, the dancer dances the eternal drooping leap, that brings his life down, down, down, down from the mind, down from the broad, beautiful, shaking breast, down to the powerful pivot of the knees, then to the ankles, and plunges deep from the ball of the foot into the earth, towards the earth's red centre, where these men belong, as is signified by the red earth with which they are smeared.

And meanwhile, the shell-cores from the Pacific sway up and down, ceaselessly, on their breasts.

Mindless, without effort, under the hot sun, unceasing, yet

never perspiring nor even breathing heavily, they dance on and on. Mindless, yet still listening, observing. They hear the deep, surging singing of the bunch of old men, like a great wind sighing. They hear the cries and yells of the man waving his bough by the drum. They catch the word of the song, and at a moment, shudder the black rattles, wheel, and the line breaks, women from men, they thread across to a new formation. And as the men wheel round, their black hair gleams and shakes, and the long fox-skin sways, like a tail.

And always, when they form into line again, it is a beautiful long straight line, flexible as life, but straight as rain.

The men round the drum are old, or elderly. They are all in a bunch, and they wear day dress, loose cotton drawers, pink or white cotton shirt, hair tied up behind with the red cords, and banded round the head with a strip of pink rag, or white rag, or blue. There they are, solid like a cluster of bees, their black heads with the pink rag circles all close together, swaying their pine-twigs with rhythmic, wind-swept hands, dancing slightly, mostly on the right foot, ceaselessly, and singing, their black bright eyes absorbed, their dark lips pushed out, while the deep strong sound rushes like wind, and the unknown words form themselves in the dark.

Suddenly the solitary man pounding the drum swings his drum round, and begins to pound on the other end, on a higher note, pang—pang—pang! instead of the previous brumm! brumm! brumm! of the bass note. The watchful man next the drummer yells and waves lightly, dancing on bird-feet. The Koshare make strange, eloquent gestures to the sky.

And again the gleaming bronze-and-dark men dancing in the rows shudder their rattles, break the rhythm, change into a queer, beautiful two-step, the long lines suddenly curl into rings, four rings of dancers, the leaping, gleaming-seeming men between the solid, subtle, submissive blackness of the women who are crowned with emerald-green tiaras, all going subtly

round in rings. Then slowly they change again, and form a star. Then again, unmingling, they come back into rows.

And all the while, all the while the naked Koshare are threading about. Of bronze-and-dark men-dancers there are some forty-two, each with a dark, crowned woman attending him like a shadow. The old men, the bunch of singers in shirts and tied-up black hair, are about sixty in number, or sixty-four. The Koshare are about twenty-four.

They are slim and naked, daubed with black-and-white earth, their hair daubed white and gathered upwards to a great knot on top of the head, whence springs a tuft of corn-husks, dry corn-leaves. Though they wear nothing but a little black square cloth, front and back, at their middle, they do not seem naked, for some are white with black spots, like a leopard, and some have broad black lines or zigzags on their smeared bodies, and all their faces are blackened with triangles or lines till they look like weird masks. Meanwhile their hair, gathered straight up and daubed white and sticking up from the top of the head with corn-husks, completes the fantasy. They are anything but natural. Like blackened ghosts of a dead corn-cob, tufted at the top.

And all the time, running like queer spotted dogs, they weave nakedly through the unheeding dance, comical, weird, dancing the dance-step naked and fine, prancing through the lines, up and down the lines, and making fine gestures with their flexible hands, calling something down from the sky, calling something up from the earth, and dancing forward all the time. Suddenly as they catch a word from the singers, name of a star, of a wind, a name for the sun, for a cloud, their hands soar up and gather in the air, soar down with a slow motion. And again, as they catch a word that means earth, earth deeps, water within the earth, or red-earth-quickenings, the hands flutter softly down, and draw up the water, draw up the earth-quickenings, earth to sky, sky to earth, influences above to in-



fluences below, to meet in the germ-quick of corn, where life is.

And as they dance, the Koshare watch the dancing men. And if a fox-skin is coming loose at the belt, they fasten it as the man dances, or they stoop and tie another man's shoe. For the dancer must not hesitate to the end.

And then, after some forty minutes, the drum stops. Slowly the dancers file into one line, woman behind man, and move away, threading towards their kiva, with no sound but the tinkle of knee-bells in the silence.

But at the same moment the thud of an unseen drum, from beyond, the sougling of deep song approaching from the unseen. It is the other half, the other half of the tribe coming to continue the dance. They appear round the kiva—one Koshare and one dancer leading the rows, the old men all abreast, singing already in a great strong burst.

So, from ten o'clock in the morning till about four in the afternoon, first one-half and then the other. Till at last, as the day wanes, the two halves meet, and the two singings like two great winds surge one past the other, and the thicket of the dance becomes a real forest. It is the close of the third day.

Afterwards, the men and women crowd on the roofs of the two low round towers, the kivas, while the Koshare run round jesting and miming, and taking big offerings from the women, loaves of bread and cakes of blue-maize meal. Women come carrying big baskets of bread and Guayava, on two hands, an offering.

And the mystery of germination, not procreation, but *putting forth*, resurrection, life springing within the seed, is accomplished. The sky has its fire, its waters, its stars, its wandering electricity, its winds, its fingers of cold. The earth has its reddened body, its invisible hot heart, its inner waters and many juices and unaccountable stuffs. Between them all, the little seed: and also man, like a seed that is busy and aware. And from the heights and from the depths man, the caller, calls: man, the knower, brings down the influences and brings

up the influences, with his knowledge: man, so vulnerable, so subject, and yet even in his vulnerability and subjection, a master, commands the invisible influences and is obeyed. Commands in that song, in that rhythmic energy of dance, in that still-submissive mockery of the Koshare. And he accomplishes his end, as master. He partakes in the springing of the corn, in the rising and budding and earing of the corn. And when he eats his bread, at last, he recovers all he once sent forth, and partakes again of the energies he called to the corn, from out of the wide universe.

#### COMMENT

Throughout much of his adult life, D. H. Lawrence roamed over the world, looking, among other things, for men alive with the vitality he praised in "Aristocracy." Convinced that most men are half dead because they willfully pursue a way of life that shuts them away from the natural sources of vital energy, he admired simple, primitive people who lived close to nature and far away from cities. During the 1920's he traveled about through Mexico and the American South West. The magnificent scenery dominated by the sun (always for him an important symbol of natural vitality) and his enthusiasm for the beauty and the way of life of the Indians of these regions called forth some of his finest descriptive writing, of which this essay is a good example.

Part of the purpose of this essay is to make us see the dance of the Sprouting Corn. But a more important part is to explain the symbolic significance of the dance as an expression of both a conception of the universe and a culture which harmonizes with that conception. Lawrence might have made his explanation in the direct, simple, and somewhat abstract terms of an anthropologist, beginning, "The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico believe that (a) the sun . . . , (b) the earth . . . ," and so on. But he chose to make his explanation through the medium of literature, which both opened up resources of expression to him and imposed certain limiting conditions. For now he had to describe the dance in a way

that had aesthetic interest (quite apart from the aesthetic interest of the dance itself): he had to interpret its meaning by a selection and arrangement of details having the appropriateness, consistency, tension, and integration upon which this aesthetic interest depends.

Such selections and arrangements, when the subject and purpose are as complicated as they are in this essay, are difficult to achieve. The essayist must exploit the suggestive powers of connotative words and phrases. He must exploit the ability of images to stimulate the imagination to the creation or recreation of strong sense impressions. He must exploit the expressive powers of rhythm, variations in sentence and paragraph length, and the order of ideas. The result is work which is unusually complex because of the intricate relationships that are established and unusually concrete because of the capacity of such a complex work to express many ideas about its subject. All this Lawrence succeeded in bringing about, and "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn" is an unusually definite, vivid, and forceful descriptive essay.

To understand some of the relationships within the essay and to see how they make the description complex and concrete, we might consider two images lying near each other in the text. In a striking passage, Lawrence, after comparing the singing of the old men to the sound of the wind in a forest, describes their hands, flickering in the air above their drums, as "windswept." The consistency of the two images delights us. We had not expected it. It is not forced, but natural; and it emphasizes qualities of the details which are particularly appropriate to the purpose of the essay. Our attention lingers on them until perhaps we hear the singing better and associate it more with all the connotations of simplicity, cleanness, naturalness, and wavering, dark mystery that are part of the meaning for the Indians of the forest and its winds; or perhaps we think of the windswept hands as driven by the weathers, as are the lives of these people, and as having the texture of the bleached, dried land. Actually, these images are not simply consistent with each other but, as we realize as soon as we look into them, are consistent with all the other details and technical features in the essay, sending out toward them a network of hundreds of meaningful relationships: to the description of the bleak, burned land, to the image of the green sprouts of corn standing in tense and dramatic contrast to

the dry winds and desolation, to the meeting of the two groups of dancers, when "the two singings like two great winds surge one past the other, and the thicket of the dance becomes a real forest," and to many others. The relationships mean many things, but most of all they seem to emphasize the oneness of the ritual—which is a symbol of the oneness of the universe: a oneness out of many things, comparable to the achieved integration of the essay itself. For these relationships are only the beginning; there are all the others created by the rhythms, the level of usage, the point of view, the order of ideas, and the rest—relationships only an artist would labor to obtain. All of them serve to bring us closer to the thing-in-itself, the dance. Furthermore, the fact that the interpretations of the aspects of life treated here are deeply imbedded in such a concrete and stirring representation makes them more emphatic and significant for many readers.

In organizing his representation of the dance, Lawrence chose a simple order of ideas which permitted him to put special emphasis upon the interpretation. Presented from the point of view of an unidentified observer, who gives immediacy to the description by speaking directly to us in a way that suggests that we are with him on the spot and the observer is simply putting into words what we together see, the essay begins with the approach to the dancing place, takes up the dancers and singers in the order that they attract notice, follows the progress of the dance, and ends with a statement of its meaning and importance. Though the order follows, up to the conclusion, the simple chronology of a visit to the village at the time of the ceremony, the details have more relation with each other than simply that of chronological sequence. As the observer approaches the place of the dance, he is surrounded by dryness, exhaustion, death. Only the memory of water and life is here in the bleak, burned-out land. Then he comes upon signs of life—pueblos, a church, streets. Suddenly life itself bursts upon him: in the midst of the apparently barren land a "forest" is waving in the wind. The gestures of the dance suggest the downward, life-giving motion of light, rain, and roots set against the upward thrusting of the earth and the new shoots of corn.

Everywhere there are such contrasts; the design of the essay is made up of them. The pale desert is set against the dark "forest"

of the dancers and their pine branches; the emptiness of the surrounding landscape is set against the fullness of the thronged dancing place; the moving men are set against the immobile women, the young dancers against the old singers, the comic Koshare against the solemn, orderly ritualists. The contrasts threaten the unity of the ceremony and the description. As Lawrence says, "When you look at the women, you forget the men." And later: "When you look at the men, you forget the women." But the sense of design is stronger than the tensions created by the contrasts, and we see them balanced in a symmetrical unity which is not only pleasing but, as we have observed, meaningful. In the final paragraph Lawrence resolves them in the image of man and the seed between earth and sky—the commanding centers of the universe that unite all things in oneness.

Within the larger contrasting elements, the details and devices are carefully chosen for consistency of pictorial and tonal effect, as has already been pointed out with reference to the singing and the hands of the old men. Every word, every phrase of the opening, for example, suggests desolation. And whether in contrast or agreement, all parts of the essay are appropriate to the primitive world of earth, sky, the weathers, and the cycles of birth and death and to the meaning Lawrence found in them. They concentrate the imagination as well-integrated art should, giving it the power to see far into the things described. The concentration is enforced by Lawrence's skillful repetitions, which not only emphasize his ideas but suggest a certain unchanging sameness in the land, the people, and the ritual of the dance. To this he adds hammer-like blows of accented monosyllables in the opening sentences ("Pale, dry, baked earth. . . . Low hills of baked pale earth. . . .") and the descriptions of the dance (" . . . the eternal drooping leap, that brings his life down, down, down, down from the mind. . . .") and sudden abrupt sentence fragments. These add to the emphasis and join with the repetitions, barely escaping monotony, in an effect that is almost an incantation and is particularly suitable to the nature and purpose of both the dance and the essay.

When we have finished reading a descriptive essay such as this one, we realize that an extraordinary thing has happened. We have perceived more of the qualities of the persons, places, or events de-

scribed than we would have if we had encountered them in "real" life. The vividness, intensity, and unity of the literary representation have made this possible. Paradoxically, therefore, art, which must often sacrifice literal "truth" and must always leave out many aspects of its subjects in order to achieve an organization having formal beauty, frequently seems more "true" and even more concrete than reality itself because, though in quantity there is less to see in it, it makes us look harder and see more.

## Sunshine Charley

EDMUND WILSON

A YOUNG college man, according to a legend of the boom, went to work at the National City Bank. One day Charles L. Mitchell, then its president, came through on a tour of inspection. "Mr. Mitchell," said the young man in a low voice, "may I speak to you for a moment?" The great banker and bond salesman scowled: "What is it?" he demanded. The young man politely pressed him to step aside out of earshot of the others present. Still scowling, Mitchell complied. Said the young man in a gentle whisper: "Your trousers are unbuttoned, sir." "You're fired!" flashed the great financier.

In those days the trousers of Charles E. Mitchell could no more be unbuttoned than Louis the Fourteenth's grammar could be at fault. He was the banker of bankers, the salesman of salesmen, the genius of the New Economic Era. He was the man who had taken the National City Company, that subsidiary of the National City Bank which had been established, according to the practice of the New Economic Era, as an institution legally distinct but actually identical with the bank, to set up shop for the disposal of securities which the bank was prohibited from selling, and had transformed it in six years' time from a room with a stenographer, a boy and a clerk into an organization with a staff of 1400 and branch offices all over

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the country, which sold a billion and a half dollars' worth of securities a year, the largest corporation in the country. At its summit, like an emperor, sat Mitchell, dynamic, optimistic and insolent, sending out salesmen in all directions as he preached to them, bullied them, bribed them; had them clerking in security shops on the street level of every provincial city where they sold bonds like groceries in A. and P. stores; had them knocking at the doors of rural houses like men with vacuum cleaners or Fuller brushes; had them vying with each other in bond-selling contests; had them intoxicated, hypnotized, drugged, always afraid of being fired if they failed to sell more and more bonds—"You cannot stand still in this business!—you fellows are not *Self-Starters!*"—till they would resort to faking orders merely to inflate their figures and invest their own salaries in these securities about whose value they knew as little as the people they were selling them to.

The days of the highly respectable banker who advised widows and young people, were over. The public had the salesmen always at their heels; the salesmen had always behind them the megaphone voice, the indomitable jaw, the nagging telegrams, of Mitchell. He sold the American public in ten years over fifteen billion dollars' worth of securities. He sold them the stock of automobile companies presently to dissolve into water; he sold them the bonds of South American republics on the verge of insolvency and revolution; he sold them the stock of his own bank, which after October, 1929, dropped in three weeks from \$572 to \$220 and which was recently worth \$20. In the minds of the public, of his minions, of himself, Charles E. Mitchell had reached an apotheosis. In his days of greatness, it was boasted, he always traveled by special train. One of his salesmen, who was afterwards ruined by his investments in the Mitchell securities, described his master's brain as "spinning like a great wheel in a Power House" and spoke almost with trembling of the terror he inspired; and Bruce Barton, when Mitchell had taken him up into the Bankers' Club and shown



him the kingdoms of New York from the window, prostrated himself before him in the pages of the *American Magazine*. When bond salesmen came to him, he told Barton, complaining they were unable to find buyers, he always took them up into the Bankers' Club and said to them: "Look down there! There are six million people with incomes that aggregate thousands of millions of dollars. They are just waiting for someone to come and tell them what to do with their savings. Take a good look, eat a good lunch, and then go down and tell them! If there is nothing in that picture which stirs a man's imagination, he doesn't belong in New York!" It was not long after this that Bruce Barton, whose father had been a minister, announced that Jesus Christ's true mission had been that of the Supreme Salesman. Mitchell blazed like the great central source of the energy and heat of the boom: his colleagues called him "Sunshine Charley."

Today that sunshine has faded. Charley Mitchell looks cheap in court. Through long sessions of the muggy June weather while the reporters go to sleep at their table and the judge invites the jury to take their coats off, among the pallid creatures of the courtroom whose skins seem never to have known any light save that of the soapy globes of the chandeliers, whose fat legs seem never to have known any exercise save stalking the courtroom floor, he sits behind the wooden railing that separates the spectators from the trial, broad-shouldered but short-legged, his grizzled hair growing down his neck and forehead, his long nose with its blunt end no longer driving salesmen out to their prey but bent humbly down toward the table. Against the neutral complexions and the tasteless clothes of the courtroom, he is conspicuous for his ruddy face and for the high stiff white collar, the blue serge suit, the white handkerchief sticking out of the breast pocket, of the big downtown days of the boom. Behind him, ledgers, suitcases, crammed briefcases, are all that is left of those days—those dizzying prof-

its, those mammoth transactions, the millennial boasts of the bankers, the round-eyed hopes of the public, now merely a tableful of papers which has to be produced in court.

Sitting quiet, looking often toward the clock, he listens to the witnesses called to testify as to whether or not his sale to his wife of certain shares of National City Bank stock, his sale of certain other shares of Anaconda Copper stock, and his failure to report \$666,666.67 from the management fund of the National City Bank, were devices to evade the income tax. Max Steuer, Mitchell's lawyer, has called him a "big fish victim of mob hysteria"; and the idea of big fish haunted me as I watched the officials of J. P. Morgan and of the National City Bank trying not to get their bosses into trouble. The boom produced its own human type, with its own physical and psychological characteristics, its own more overblown and softer-headed species of the American business man. Enormous and with no necks, they look like hooked and helpless frogs or like fat bass or logy groupers hauled suddenly out of the water and landed gasping on the stand. They pant, they twitch in their seat, they make gestures finlike and feeble—one can imagine great gills behind their jowls straining to breathe the alien air. One man recalls with hideous exactitude those strange monsters dragged up by William Beebe from the depths of the South Seas: the same head that seems bigger than the body, the same gaping mouth of long sharp teeth, the same nose flattened down to nothing to give scope to the undershot jaw. The only thing lacking in the financier is the natural fishing-rod with its hooks and its luminous bait which grows out of the forehead of the deep-sea anglers and catches the fish on which they feed; and the imagination fills in this. The National City Bank has consummated some of the largest mergers on record; and it is reported that certain fish of this species can swallow fish five and a half times their length. Beebe says he found seven wild ducks in one of them.

Mitchell himself is a personality of more character, but he,

too, is out of his element on the witness-stand. The great salesman of salesmen is washed up, and the two Jewish lawyers fight over him. Steuer speaks so gently, works so quietly—shrunk, round-shouldered, round-headed, bald, with a sallow, old, shrewd, Semitic face—that all the spectators can catch of his case is a faint continual lisp. With little round mouse ears sticking out from the side of his head, he mouses between the jury, the judge and the witness, keeping the whole thing deeply discreet. George Medalie has solidity and weight, and instead of hushing his cross-examination, he launches his questions distinctly in tones of metallic sarcasm and moves back to make the witness speak louder when he wants to bring an answer out. Mitchell seems almost as uncomfortable with the one as with the other.

At the prompting of Steuer, he tells deliberately a very halting story. The sales were real sales, his wife really wanted to buy the stock, he had the very best legal advice to guarantee their legality, etc. When he pledged his personal resources to help the National City Company buy National City Bank stock during the first stock-market crash, he had not hoped to get anything out of it, he had merely been trying to save the bank. Yet Mrs. Mitchell, Medalie shows, had not had enough income to pay even the interest on the loan from Morgan which would have been necessary to carry the stock she was supposed to have bought; no transfer stamps had been attached to the letter recording the sale; and afterwards Mitchell had bought the stock back from his wife at exactly the same price. He had bought the other stock back, too; and the \$666,666.67 which is asserted by the defense to have been a loan, had, according to the prosecution, been written off the books of the bank as if it had been a bonus.

On the stand, Mitchell's prestige evaporates. The perfect type of the big executive of the cigarette and success-course advertisements undergoes a degradation. Confronting the lawyers with his blue suit, his robust torso and grizzled crest, with

his scowling brows of power and his forceful nose joined by coarse lines to his wide and common mouth, he throws out his hands in stock gestures of frankness and exposition, making things clear weakly; tries to put over points with a finger that no longer carries conviction; breaks down in the middle of sentences, frowning helplessly, his mouth hanging open. In reply to questions featured by his attorney, "I did!" "I certainly did!" he declares with the ham dramatic emphasis of a movie actor playing the role of a big executive. And there is a suggestion of the racetrack about him—yes, he used to take bets on securities. It has been a mannerism of Mitchell's to hitch one eyebrow up and pull the other portentously down as if he were squinting into the mysteries of finance which ordinary people couldn't penetrate, but which to him revealed refulgent visions. Year after year, as the depression deepened, still did his prophecies never fail. But today the shaggily squinted eye seems shying at awkward questions.

It is wrong to take out on individuals one's resentment at general abuses. Charley Mitchell, the investment superman, could never of course have been created without the mania of the public to believe in him. It was the climate and soil of the boom which made of the ambitious young man who had worked his way through Amherst by giving courses in public speaking, the smart clerk at Western Electric who used to pay out part of his weekly \$10 to take business courses at night-school—it was the climate and soil of the boom which nurtured this being and his fellows. So the eyes of the fishes of the dark ocean depths become eventually atrophied and blind, so they learn to excrete their luminous mucus; so dwelling below the level where a diet of plants is possible, they develop their valise-like carnivorous jaws.

And it is cruel to expose the discomfiture of a man enduring deep humiliation. But all the prosperity writers these many years have been laboring to build up Charley Mitchell as a

respectable public figure. And they are still at it: the newspaper reporters at the trial have worked hard to provide him with a firmness of front which he certainly did not display when I saw him. One financial paper, in particular, has grown emotional and almost poetic in describing the melting effect of Mitchell's testimony. The auditors, it says, as they heard him, relived the great days of expansion—for a moment the pulse throbbed, the spirit lifted, as they recalled that lost faith and hope—how could they refuse to put themselves in the place of their tragically mistaken leader, how could they find it in their hearts to condemn him? Well, it is time that we ceased to allow the financial pages of the papers to determine our impressions and moods. Charley Mitchell has been arrested at the orders of the President of the United States, and while we have got him, let us take a good look at him. The head of the biggest financial institution in the country, whose arrogance was lately so great that it was reputed to constitute *lèse majesté* to tell him his pants were unbuttoned and who, proceeding in the same spirit, apparently, did not even consider it necessary to go through the barest formalities of covering up his deals against the income tax, is a man with a full-fleshed common face and a fierce unconvincing eye—a man of a low order, caught in suspicious circumstances and hard put to it to talk himself out.

## London

SIR OSBERT SITWELL

FOR THE LAST four years, London, especially during autumn and winter nights, has seemed to many of its citizens a place they had never seen before. Yet to others it may have revived memories of a London of which they have read; of London in the age of Elizabeth, or at times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the words of Dekker, as "soone as ever the sunne was gon out of sight . . . darkness like a thief out of hedge crept upon the earth," and "the Banckrupt, the Fellon and all that owed any money, and for feare of arrests, or Justices Warrants had like so many snayls kept their houses over their heads all the day before, began now to creep out of their shels, to stalke up and downe the streets as uprightly . . . as if they meant to nock against the starres with the crownes of their heads . . . The serving-man dare then walke with his wench: the Private Punke (otherwise called one that boards in London) who like a Pigeon sits billing all day within doores, and leares to steppe over the threshold, does then walke the round till midnight, after she hath been swaggering amongst pottle-pots and vintner bags."

During all the war period this great city has been at night a secret, apparently deserted, hive of darkened streets, of glimmering torches that dare not give so much light as Dekker's candle; of corners where footpads, too brutish to be conscious

of their ancient ancestry, lurk once more, and where the prostitutes are bolder again in the pursuit of their dreary trade, jostling, laughing, talking loudly in broken English. Looked back on, it seems that the nights have always been dark and cold, with a soaking, all-pervading drizzle. People hurry down the streets as if they were haunted. They appear with a startling suddenness out of the darkness, and are swallowed up again by it as swiftly. Shapes are discerned for an instant, but not faces, unless a passer-by strikes a match for his cigarette. Even the searchlights, those glittering instruments that continually probe the darkness of the sky, reveal to us nothing; great domes in the sky, certainly, and golden roads of light, changing, shifting patterns, effected with diagonal lines that afford strange revelations of perspective, making us realise the immense distances above us in the heavens, so great as to have no distance; but nothing here, nothing down here below, on our own creeping level, as we scurry along, borne on a keen wind. The last buses, with their small blue lights, are starting—they seem always to be starting—and a perpetual bleating sounds from the pavements and the black doorways of apartment houses and hotels: Taxi! Taxi! Taxi! But not a single cab answers the call; each one approaching is watched by anxious groups on each side of the road; but it speeds on through the mud, unheeding. Sometimes groups of men and women in uniform, wardens or A.F.S., stand in the dark gulfs that are the openings to houses, watching the interminable calculations of the searchlights, thinking of the end of their term of duty, wondering perhaps when the war will finish, and what London will be like in the years that follow.

Even as I write, London is changing again; a different sort of city, very confident of victory, has been brought into being before our eyes. Its people walk with a new ease and swagger. Many buildings have gone—yet could this be no city but London . . . And it is at least appropriate that the background should vary, for the essence of London is change, and, in turn-

ing my half-century, I have seen and can remember at least five Londons. . . .

The earliest was the London of the late 'nineties, when I was a small boy; a London of vast railway stations for ever full of golden fog; a London to which the trains that came were lit by little yellow gas flames flowering like *immortelles* beneath an inverted and steamy glass bowl. Outside, the carriages, the omnibuses, the hansoms, waited in line: but the "growler," or four-wheeler, with the inevitable smell of oats and beer and leather within its mouldy interior, was the chief method of conveyance. First came the drive through the endless mean streets, and then the West End, the old Regent Street lying in front of us, gas-lit, with the curve of some sickle-bay in a Greek island . . . At night there was little traffic, the clop-clop of an occasional cab, the bells of a hansom, and the forlorn and desultory whistling that served as its enticement. The daylight, when—and if—it came, revealed a city of yellow plaster houses, continually repainted, a modest city of crumbling caryatids and vases—though always, of course, there existed as a background and a culmination the splendid exteriors of Wren's churches, to show to what heights of genius, and even of magnificence, the English art of good manners and the plain statement of humane facts could rise. It showed, too, a city of paint and varnish and of glitter, transient in its impeccable finish. The brief winter sun flecked its red-gold on every kind of shining object, brass plates, plate-glass windows, elegant balconies, newly painted and varnished doors, and upon the royal coats of arms, and supporting lions and unicorns that embellished certain favoured shops, and drew out of them, though in a subdued and most respectable manner, a thousand muted sparkles. In spite of the high lights, there was no ostentation. The top-hats of the wealthy and of the hansom-cab drivers, with their polish and dark shining glitter, might well have stood for the symbol of this world now perished; but the clothes of the women, rich and poor alike, were complicated, fussy, designed



for richness rather than for beauty or for smartness; fashions that remained the costume of Cockneys on gala days even until the outbreak of the present war. This London that I first remember was the capital of the world, whither the Thames bore its tribute of the spices of the East; delicacies responsible for as many wars as, since that time, has been the gold of South Africa—also conveyed here regularly, and over which hostilities were even then about to break out. Cattle from South America, leather from Russia, endless objects from China, wheat from America and Canada, all were brought hither, while some of the cargoes, no doubt, were of the most unexpected and almost fabulous character,—humming-birds from the West Indies, hundred-year-old eggs from China for the colony in Limehouse, sea-shells from the coastline of Arabia, fruit from South Africa, turtles for Lord Mayors' banquets brought from the South Sea Islands or the islands of the West Indies. And the great fortunes that resulted from the commerce in these and other outlandish goods were to be lavished on such temporary, homely things as paint and varnish in a city so dark and foggy that one could seldom see the effect which they were attempting; thus the little sparkle that could be obtained ranked as a moral, rather than a material, aim.

The next London I knew was the city of stilted Edwardian baroque, when the full tide of riches and materialism was sweeping over Victorian London, submerging it. The old Nash houses of Park Lane, so modest in their luxury, many of them rising to no more than two storeys, country villas set down on the most expensive sites in the world, were making way for riotous excesses, for flights in the Chinese Gothic manner, and for fantasies in the Hindu and Arabian styles; the capital of England was becoming a cosmopolitan city. Everywhere you looked the stucco houses were beginning to be torn down, and the monotonous, swollen palaces of commerce and of the newly-created bureaucracy were replacing them. Only the lodging-houses and the slums remained the same. London, for-

merly, in the last century, renowned for its dullness and decorum, was now the pleasure capital of the world, and for the first time conscious of its mission. Triumphal roads, arches, stone balustrades, had been constructed. Blore's old plaster front of Buckingham Palace, chocolate brown, and with the statucs of Britannia and the Lions decorating its roof-line, was soon to be hacked down, and a rather mean and featureless Portland stone façade, a kind of gigantic prophecy of prefabrication, was to be erected in its place. Portland stone constituted an ideal to be worshipped rather than used. This was now a city built for processions, called into being to challenge the Rome of the Emperors; these great streets were built for visiting monarchs and for semi-captive princes to ride down, potentates who must be cheered enough, but not too much, on their way to Guildhall banquets. The Guildhall itself, and those who governed it, were still unique in their civic consequence, as when Dunbar had praised them five hundred years before:

Thy famous Maire, by pryncely governaunce,  
With swerd of justice the rulith prudently.  
No Lord of Parys, Venyce, or Floraunce  
In dignytie or honoure goeth to hym nye.  
He is exampler, loode-ster, and guye.

At night, as during the day, the din of motors, of lorries thundering along the roads, was overwhelming. In the daytime, horse traffic had almost disappeared, except for the vans of a few obsolete, obstinate tradesmen, yet clinging to old ways and deathlessly determined to block the traffic; though at night the slow, clumsy market carts, with the carter asleep, still lumbered along Piccadilly. But by 1912, there were not more than a hundred hansoms left; one of them was the only three-wheeled cab in London. In addition to the two enormous wheels of the ordinary hansom, it boasted a small third wheel tucked underneath it, the purpose of which remained obscure.

This cab was owned, and had been invented, by its driver, who wore a black bowler hat and a black beard. He was a man of marked originality, and a delightful and untiring conversationalist, and I used much to enjoy a talk with him after the opera, for normally he plied outside Covent Garden Theatre.

The hotels, previously discreet and even muffled places of comfort, given over still to muffins and stone hot-water bottles, had now blossomed out into cosmopolitan centres, created in a universal Louis-Quinze style, and each, despite the impossibility of telling it from the next, famous throughout the globe. The opera was the most celebrated in the world, mounted on an unusually extravagant and ugly scale, until Sir Thomas Beecham came to reform it. But even if the stage often left something—or rather less of something—to be desired, the audience was certainly the most astonishing spectacle in Europe. The glitter of the jewels and the general splendour could not be matched elsewhere, and the talk, during the music, was louder—if not more entertaining. (The story of the well-known hostess who cancelled her opera-box on the grounds that she had a sore throat, belongs to this period, though it is said to have occurred in later years.) Indeed, Edwardian London rivalled for gaiety that of Elizabeth or Charles II.

Nevertheless, in this genial Edwardian climate, the arts too were beginning to be respected, and there were among the rich some who had begun on occasion to wonder whether the clever were not more amusing than the dull. They would perhaps experiment, invite one or two of them to their houses . . . Indeed a ferment was to be felt in the art world. Shaw's plays were beginning to be popular; Augustus John's vast and impressive pictures of gypsies squinting in their camps were attracting much attention, and, finally, Russia, represented by Monsieur Diaghilev and his band of painters and dancers and musicians, had taken artistic London captive with a genius for music, dancing and stage spectacle new to Western Europe.

Russian ideas now influenced fashion and spread even to house decoration. The ballet *Schéhérazade* alone was responsible for innumerable lampshades and cushions that blazed in barred and striped splendour from the shop windows; and a more exotic style began to banish the drawing-room wall-papers trellised with roses and water-lilies, and the early Edwardian wood-paneling, that had seemed created as a background for long cigars, or perhaps even fashioned out of the fabric of their boxes. For the rest, in the warm long summer evenings, dance music prospered in the golden air of the squares, and striped awnings rose like mushrooms in the night to shelter the international herds of the rich. For more rich people congregated here than anywhere in the globe; and more poor—but the poor too now had their diversions, mammoth football matches and cricket matches, and newspapers which, on Sunday, served up at great length every species of moral delinquency in order to shock the intense and abiding sense of respectability and responsibility, dwelling still in the hearts of the majority of the citizens of London.

This glittering city of lights ended on 4th August 1914, and for the next four years a different London, a London in transition, came into being. . . . Now it had become a place devoted to officers and to men on leave. We were perpetually surprised at the way in which this darkened city, ever bleeding from the immense losses in process of being suffered just across the water, kept up its spirits. Lights were low, and bombs—though few and feeble compared with the bombs that fall on cities today—were yet sufficient in number and strength to be intimidating; but the cheerfulness was maintained, even when there was no manifest reason for it. Indeed, the First World War came in and went out in a blaze of popularity. I saw the vast crowds cheering it in front of the Palace in August 1914; I saw them dance it out in every paved square and open space on the night of the 11th November 1918.

Within a few years of the Armistice, one London the more

had come into being—a new city which largely depended on the ruin of the old. The clouds of dust, rising from street and square, now added the same peculiar glory to London sunsets that the volcanic dust from the erupting mountain of Krakatoa was previously said to have produced. The age of destruction, which had originated in 1914, was continuing. Concrete was beginning to replace Portland stone, and the country itself, within a radius of thirty miles, was becoming part of London. A vast new economic class had been called into being, and the individual members of it were being housed in the red bungalows and villas on the city's edge. There was a new tendency to extravagance in life and morals, and the acts of a few rich young people, who, endowed with an idiot persistence, set themselves to enjoying life in their own manner—which culminated in the celebrated exploit when they, literally, “set the Thames on fire”—attracted more attention than the steady conduct of the mass of reputable citizens. But the mass of reputable citizens loved, nevertheless, to read of these antics in the papers.

The ferment in the arts continued, but there was never quite the same feeling as had existed in the former decade, that we stood at the edge of a great art revival. The fact that the stupid had been once again proved right—for they had been the only people to foretell the war—had set a further premium on general stupidity. It became the rage . . . All the same, in spite of the complacency, in spite of the smugness, in spite of the vulgarity, it was an epoch of hope and accomplishment. People were happy . . . But at the end of the pleasure-loving twenties a difference was to be sensed in the air, a certain imponderable dullness, typified by the new fashion in house decoration; there was, it seemed, a rush for the vacuum, for negation, for nothingness, for beige and cinders and ashes; for white, and more white, and white on white, and near-white.

Now came the desolate London of the 'thirties, a disconsolate and apprehensive city; the City of the Slump, when all won-

dered what lay behind the curtain—for everyone could feel that it was on the point of rising. An intense and dreary earnestness blighted the arts. The newer buildings were less vulgar but more boring. There must be no trimmings. Life was to be a matter of wrestling with facts in a continual struggle, and economics began to take the place of religion. (Soon it would be impossible to distinguish the speeches of an Archbishop from those of Lord Keynes.) Wren and the great builders had not, it was felt, looked life in the face, or come to grips with it. A wave of spiritual desolation engulfed literature, architecture and painting, and the voice of Lord Elton began to be heard in the land. I am not trying to say that the painters were not in themselves good, but a nightmare brooded behind their minds, and poetry—leaving even the marvellous world of nightmare aside—became acrostical, argumentative, a matter of addition and subtraction + moral fervour. But artists are always right, always initiate, always inspired ahead by the years to come. . . . Outside, apart from the looks on the faces, which had indeed altered, the life of the West End remained much the same, except that hotels were fuller, the food in them richer and worse, the motor-cars more numerous. And when a reigning monarch—so much rarer a figure-head now than in the London I have previously described—came to visit us, he was still received in a style with which no other place could vie. . . . At night, though, a difference was to be detected. There were lights, neon lights and electric signs. The news, nearly always bad, wound itself in letters of fire round the squalid cornices of large Victorian buildings, yet, in spite of the greater illumination, the life of the streets had grown less vivid, partly, perhaps, because of the various purity campaigns, fiercely supported by the police, and partly because the suburbs offered the same form and quality of entertainment. The night was dull.

The London that followed was the darkened, sublunar London that we know today, and that I have attempted to describe

at the beginning of this essay. Yet, as I have said, this war-time London itself has varied widely enough . . . Compare, for example, the city of dropping bombs in September 1940 with that of today, 1943. Both are alike only in their darkness. On the second night of the "blitz" I walked from Charles Street, Berkeley Square, to my home in Chelsea. It took me half an hour, and I passed hardly anyone on the way except constables on duty, in steel helmets. There was no traffic; a few buses, dark, black and deserted, drawn up in small lines at the side of the roads. The noise then came from falling bombs, not from our gun-fire, for, in those times, we had few guns with which to fire, few aircraft with which to give battle. That kind of night has gone; only the black-out persists. . . . Now, as I write, the long summer evenings are beginning, and we are no longer confined to the primitive darkness of the Stone Age. The streets, during the long twilight, are crowded with soldiers of every nationality, French and Dutch, Greek and Polish, American and Norwegian. Some talk gaily, others are musing, thinking perhaps of the vast, endless wheatfields of Canada or the States, that roll their golden waves over a whole continent, covering it with the sign of the sun; others are remembering sadly the tobacco-stained air of the cafés of provincial towns in France, the quiet talks and the games of chess, or the inns, where workmen sit outside under a trellised vine, above a river, and drink coarse red wine. Others, again, recollect scenes in Poland and Bohemia, pictures that suddenly flash into their minds, memories of their family, a chanting in a church, a bear trundling out of a wood into the snow.

In the daytime the city blazes with life, in spite of the ruined buildings, now tidied up and finished off like newly-made graves. The flat lawns of water, installed where once were the basements of houses, reflect the light, and people—because of the deadness of the winter nights—cram into these hours of summer daylight an unimaginable pressure of life. The parks too, trampled and without any railings, are fuller than in

peace-time. Airmen, sailors, soldiers are lying and sitting on the grass, sunning themselves, and in some parks, where formerly duels were fought, groups of sturdy young Americans are playing baseball. The streets round Piccadilly teem with men in uniform, especially Americans. Everything is very bright, flamboyant and sure of itself. And the spring of 1943 provided an unequalled setting for this gaiety; it has favoured the Americans, who must have been granted almost as many hours of sunshine here as they would have enjoyed at home. Flawless day followed flawless day, alike in its golden rind, until finally, in April, the whole city burst into flower; apple and cherry blossom, prunus and peach and lilac, in a thousand delicate, egg-shell varieties. The suburban gardens, the gardens of Hampstead and Chiswick, and such outlying districts, became comparable to tropical jungles. You could scarcely see the walls dividing them. The new shrubs introduced into common use some twenty years ago—and every Londoner is a gardener—had now grown up. Never had there been such a profusion of blossom. Even in China, even in Central America, with its jarcanda and coral and flamboyant trees, even in Spain, during the spring, when in the orchards of Andalusia, almond, peach and orange burst simultaneously into bloom, never have I beheld a scene which suggested an equal force of flowering.

It was such weather as caused you to look out of window every instant, and called on you to walk whenever you got the chance . . . I used every day in those weeks to go by the Green Park, and thence into St. James's Street, making my way there by means of what had formerly been a dark, narrow passage, pressed between high walls of old and grimy yellow brick, but was now open to air and sky. On one side, below a wall a foot high, I passed, every time, a floor of white marble, with an inlaid circular pattern, in the antique manner, of porphyry and serpentine; a floor now identical in appearance with those from which originally it had been copied a hundred years before, those pavements that have been uncovered by archaeol-



ogists in the Roman Forum, or in the Golden House of Nero. Thus one night of modern high explosive can be seen to have produced the same effect as the rolling past of two millenniums, including numberless incursions of old-fashioned barbarians, and numberless outbreaks of old-fashioned wars . . . But what imparted to this floor for me a particular interest arose, I deduce, from my egotism: this was the hall floor of a house in which I had often dined; it was here, standing on these designs in inlaid marble, that the butler and footman had waited deferentially to take the top-hats and coats of the guests. On the staircase above had stood the major-domo after dinner, posted there to call out the names of those who were arriving for the ball; names that he called portentously, as though trying to evoke an echo out of a tomb. The rooms that lay beyond were, when I knew them, always full of people, gay with flowers and pictures, and with tapestries that seemed from their colour to have been fashioned from rose petals. . . . When next I see the floor of a villa uncovered in some meadow or by the classic sea, I shall be able to picture better than before the life of which it is the surviving token. And the smaller floors, those wooden miles of flooring that have gone, completely vanished; they meant as much, and are no less our gage that London shall be rebuilt, and yet remain her own self, only more splendid.

Of all the cities in the world, the future calls upon London, when the hour strikes, to rise from her ashes with a magnificence transcending even her own tradition in that respect. For, indeed, ashes are nothing new to her; like the Phoenix, she soared up from them once before, in a splendour born from flames. This historic city, already of "high renown" in the Middle Ages, bore in it, even then, the traces of a legendary past and the seed of a no less fabulous future. Moreover, it was the prototype in Europe of the great modern cosmopolitan centres. As early as the first years of the Hanoverian dynasty, it possessed—apart from Naples—the largest population of

any western city, and by the middle of the eighteenth century it had come to contain its enclaves of Chinese, French, Indians, Italians. And this fact, more than any other, illustrates the nature of London. As with Imperial Rome before her, the very character of the place is complex in its essence, varied and variable. And we must, therefore, be most careful not to rebuild it in a way that will restrict it to one particular facet of its genius.

London, then, is not one city, but a noble group of cities, united by the waters of a river—the Thames, that tranquil and seemly river which, with its dark, quiet flowing, has made our capital one of the world's treasures.

Above all ryvers thy Ryver hath renowne wrote Dunbar, for the importance of the Thames was recognised from the first moment that London began to flower, and, instead of trying to hide it, we should undoubtedly strive continually to lay emphasis upon it. It is the Thames that quickens London every day with a breath of sea-air, and the Thames through which the blood of the Five Continents beats. These unsensational waters, with their typical lack of glitter, with their effects of beauty dependent upon surrounding mists and darkness, and a sense of purpose, are yet more important than any of the great historic rivers of the world. The Thames is, indeed, the one permanent feature of a shifting scene, for London changes with each decade. It was always a lavish, always a spendthrift city, tearing itself down and building itself up, apparently with no purpose but commerce and a love of change. We Londoners have destroyed, or allowed to be destroyed, even in the last two decades, far more of our historic heritage and architectural wonders—take the great squares of the West End alone—than the Germans could ruin in several years of war. During each raid that I experience in London, I was able to thank Heaven that we had been permitted to enjoy the sensation of destroying these things ourselves, and that if, for example, the Germans were blowing up the present Regent Street, at least the damage to the arts would be negligible. Nor

must we forget that the clearing process effected by the German planes has, esthetically, its good aspect. If it has destroyed little of military value, it has rid many of the classical churches of their hideous Victorian coloured glass windows, which defaced entirely the interiors of some of them. Similarly, in certain instances, the glass roofs of buildings have been injured, and we can see how unsuitable they were and are. Those condensers and preservers of fog and darkness are no longer apropos. Time, moreover, heals the wounds of a great city very quickly, and, for example, many who know Paris very intimately would be amazed if they realised how much of it perished in the Siege and the Commune, how much has been patched, mended and renewed. The unforgivable scars in that city, the boulevards and the vulgarisation, were the work of the inhabitants themselves; Haussmann's wholesale reconstruction, regardless of tradition, made Paris hard and mean and featureless, and long ago, moreover, its great arcaded alleys had become the centre of the world's traffic congestion; which nullified their whole purpose.

What sort of city, then, are we to build to make a capital worthy of the people of London? ( . . . I do not intend to write about London here from the angle of hygienic housing, but from the esthetic point of view, for bad housing will no longer be tolerated. Moreover, one cannot live in one's bath; we must have a perspective outside it.) . . . First, let me offer a word of advice.

Never trust the architects; they are the most untrustworthy of artists, and have now become entangled with interior decoration and the various stages of fashion. Some would like to make the City of London into a garden suburb; others, under the spell of a tardy but grandiose Edwardian ideal, into the sort of thing we have lately seen at the Royal Academy; others want a cement hive for busy bees, a Middle-Western city or Mid-European, a concrete cobweb of flat-faced, flat-roofed houses. But we must avoid constructing a city in which each

house resembles an aeroplane. There is no need for it, any more than there was a need, in the nineties of the last century, to build a city in which every house resembled a bicycle. The aeroplane is only a method of conveyance. We want none of these schemes, no excesses, old or new. . . . What we want is a new *London*, not just a new city.

Therefore the characteristics of the place, inherent in the nature of the various districts and its inhabitants, must not be denied. . . . London is, and must continue to be, a conglomerate city, what in botanical terms is called a composite. We must uphold the ancient—what little of it remains—as much as build another London. Modelling our new capital we must yet take as a model the old. Above all, we must remember the classical tradition, the hundred spires and shell-like turrets of Wren and Hawksmoor, so dignified and beautiful, and so unlike any other system of architecture in the world; a London that could only be London, austere and solid and reasonable, for all its imagination. We must never again haggle for years over the rebuilding of a bridge, but build with certainty, create bridges that are a hundred times more lovely and more effective than those that stand today.

Let us examine the proposed semi-Edwardian scheme, for it has the greatest popular support since it entails the spending of the most public—by which is meant private—money. We saw plans and models of gardens and fountains and arcades built with arches too wide apart to give us shelter from the delights of our climate. . . . Fortunately, London is London; even when we abolish a great part of the fog by abandoning the use of coal fires, it—thank God—will still be a lovely and a foggy city. . . . I imagine that, when the first Romans or the first Britons came to the site of this great metropolis, what they beheld on the marsh each side of the river banks was—a London fog. That, too, is what our most remote descendants will see.

It is a special and a very lovely robe of pearly smoke and

mist in which our capital thus arrays herself. It possesses every attribute of poetry, and has been lauded, in their various mediums, by artists as dissimilar as Dickens and Whistler. It may not be easy to breathe, but it is the native atmosphere, and so there can be no purpose in introducing into it those vistas created for sunlight in Florence, Paris or New York. London should—and always will—be a Gothic city, true to its soil, a place of surprises, in which you come upon things suddenly, and not a town in which you can see at great distances. In Rome, the superb twin colonnades of St. Peter's enclose, above its fountains, stretching high over domes and towers, a vast arena of blue sky, piled with Roman clouds, like the trophies of conquered nations; but here, in London, we should not, if we are wise, plan to see too much of the sky, or it will fall on us in rain and snow and soot. We need arcades, certainly; but to protect, and not to expose, us. If you open up a vista of St. Paul's, what you will see will not be St. Paul's, but more fog, and, perhaps, a policeman looming up out of it from near an island . . . The people of Bologna created, against the rain and cold of their winter, a special city of narrow arcaded streets, giving shelter. We must, similarly and obversely, be true to the tremendous fogs that have been granted to us as a birthright. We must remember that both Inigo Jones and Wren, though it was then a so much smaller city, understood London. They gave it those precise towers and spires round which London fogs wreath themselves with a peculiar splendour, suddenly releasing, as it were, the vision of them, so that they are unexpected, magnificent. We must remember that Nash's stucco and Wren's Portland stone were the most admirably suited mediums for building in this atmosphere, for the first could be—and must be—continually repainted, and the second acquired, from being smoked, a perfect texture and colour. We must try to invent new building mediums with the same qualities. We must never seek to emulate other cities, but only to transcend our own. We must not, for example,

embank our river (alas, it has already been done), hemming it in as if it were some paltry ditch, because continental cities have treated their rivers in this way. We must avoid making another and more heartless cosmopolis; a poorer edition of some South American city copied from Paris or Vienna. We must remember that the people of this city are a people full of heart,—and that is what the teeming irregularities of London have always shown and represented.

The seasons may vary, and with them the aspects of London; a fresh London may grow up and disappear, but the character of its inhabitants never changes. They are, indeed, the citizens of no mean city, and prove themselves worthy of it every day; royal in their politeness, ostentatious—even the poorest—in their generosity, unequalled in their courage, unsurpassed in their originality. In spite of the immense foreign influence brought to bear on London for so many centuries, the people are the very essence of the country. Rich and poor are alike in their courage, in the continuity of their conduct and in their determination. The rich accept countless inconveniences without a murmur, resolved to bear, without flinching, everything to which they are unaccustomed,—bad food, little food, cold, walking in wet streets for miles, no servants, disagreeable servants—all because the war must be won. You can almost hear them repeating under their breath the public-school commandments: "Do not let the side down, you can't do it, don't-ye-know." The poor remain equally steadfast, working harder than ever, and taking little advantage of the position in which they now find themselves. Like those formerly more fortunate than themselves, they have little to which to look forward, but they are as resolute, unbeaten and unbeatable. And although the richer members of society may be more staid in demeanour, there is a feeling of irresponsible gaiety and *élan* about true Cockneys, as can be remarked during any Bank Holiday on Hampstead Heath. City-bred, they

an additional tolerance and quickness. An immense love of liberty, a feeling for the best of life, inspires them. In their humour there is a sort of wise gravity that no other people knows, a consciousness, too, of the sacred idiosyncrasy of every human being that is typically English.

In this connection, I often recall an occasion before the war, when I heard a Covent Garden porter, as the crowd was coming out of the Opera, hail a taxi in the street for an elegant young man in white waistcoat and top-hat, and open the door for him with the words "In with you, Norman!" . . . Or, again, I think of the time when I passed some navvies in the now destroyed Lansdowne Passage. One of them dropped a paving stone as I passed, with a tremendous crash, and, noticing that I jumped at the noise, remarked—with a true observation of character, for he plainly deduced that I was not a devotee of night life, but an artist, possessed of a delicate nervous system—"There, sir! . . . That's the worst of them night clubs!" . . .

What a mistake Hitler made to provoke these people, the inhabitants of this city, let alone of Great Britain and of the Empire! . . . How is it possible not to love Londoners, with their understanding of life, their want of envy?

# Walden (1939)

E. B. WHITE

MISS NIMS, take a letter to Henry David Thoreau. Dear Henry: I thought of you the other afternoon as I was approaching Concord doing fifty on Route 62. That is a high speed at which to hold a philosopher in one's mind, but in this century we are a nimble bunch.

On one of the lawns in the outskirts of the village a woman was cutting the grass with a motorized lawn mower. What made me think of you was that the machine had rather got away from her, although she was game enough, and in the brief glimpse I had of the scene it appeared to me that the lawn was mowing the lady. She kept a tight grip on the handles, which throbbed violently with every explosion of the one-cylinder motor, and as she sheered around bushes and lurched along at a reluctant trot behind her impetuous servant, she looked like a puppy who had grabbed something that was too much for him. Concord hasn't changed much, Henry; the farm implements and the animals still have the upper hand.

I may as well admit that I was journeying to Concord with the deliberate intention of visiting your woods; for although I have never knelt at the grave of a philosopher nor placed wreaths on moldy poets, and have often gone a mile out of my way to avoid some place of historical interest, I have always wanted to see Walden Pond. The account which you left of your sojourn there is, you will be amused to learn, a docu-

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ment of increasing pertinence; each year it seems to gain a little headway, as the world loses ground. We may all be transcendental yet, whether we like it or not. As our common complexities increase, any tale of individual simplicity (and yours is the best written and the cockiest) acquires a new fascination; as our goods accumulate, but not our well being, your report of an existence without material adornment takes on a certain awkward credibility.

My purpose in going to Walden Pond, like yours, was not to live cheaply or to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles. Approaching Concord, doing forty, doing forty-five, doing fifty, the steering wheel held snug in my palms, the highway held grimly in my vision, the crown of the road now serving me (on the right-hand curves), now defeating me (on the left-hand curves), I began to rouse myself from the stupefaction which a day's motor journey induces. It was a delicious evening, Henry, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore, if I may coin a phrase. Fields were richly brown where the harrow, drawn by the stripped Ford, had lately sunk its teeth; pastures were green; and overhead the sky had that same everlasting great look which you will find on Page 144 of the Oxford Pocket Edition. I could feel the road entering me, through tire, wheel, spring, and cushion; shall I have intelligence with earth too? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mold myself?—a man of infinite horsepower, yet partly leaves.

Stay with me on 62 and it will take you into Concord. As I say, it was a delicious evening. The snake had come forth to die in a bloody S on the highway, the wheel upon its head, its bowels flat now and exposed. The turtle had come up too to cross the road and die in the attempt, its hard shell smashed under the rubber blow, its intestinal yearning (for the other side of the road) forever squashed. There was a sign by the wayside which announced that the road had a "cotton surface." You wouldn't know what that is, but neither, for that matter,

did I. There is a cryptic ingredient in many of our modern improvements—we are awed and pleased without knowing quite what we are enjoying. It is something to be travelling on a road with a cotton surface.

The civilization round Concord to-day is an odd distillation of city, village, farm, and manor. The houses, yards, fields look not quite suburban, not quite rural. Under the bronze beech and the blue spruce of the departed baron grazes the milch goat of the heirs. Under the porte-cochere stands the re-conditioned station wagon; under the grape arbor sit the puppies for sale. (But why do men degenerate ever? What makes families run out?)

It was June and everywhere June was publishing her immemorial stanza: in the lilacs, in the syringa, in the freshly edged paths and the sweetness of moist beloved gardens, and the little wire wickets that preserve the tulips' front. Farmers were already moving the fruits of their toil into their yards, arranging the rhubarb, the asparagus, the strictly fresh eggs on the painted stands under the little shed roofs with the patent shingles. And though it was almost a hundred years since you had taken your ax and started cutting out your home on Walden Pond, I was interested to observe that the philosophical spirit was still alive in Massachusetts: in the center of a vacant lot some boys were assembling the framework of a rude shelter, their whole mind and skill concentrated in the rather inauspicious helter-skelter of studs and rafters. They too were escaping from town, to live naturally, in a rich blend of savagery and philosophy.

That evening, after supper at the inn, I strolled out into the twilight to dream my shapeless transcendental dreams and see that the car was locked up for the night (first open the right front door, then reach over, straining, and pull up the handles of the left rear and the left front till you hear the click, then the handle of the right rear, then shut the right front but open it again, remembering that the key is still in the ignition

switch, remove the key, shut the right front again with a bang, push the tiny keyhole cover to one side, insert key, turn, and withdraw). It is what we all do, Henry. It is called locking the car. It is said to confuse thieves and keep them from making off with the laprobe. Four doors to lock behind one robe. The driver himself never uses a laprobe, the free movement of his legs being vital to the operation of the vehicle; so that when he locks the car it is a pure and unselfish act. I have in my life gained very little essential heat from laprobes, yet I have ever been at pains to lock them up.

That evening was full of sounds, some of which would have stirred your memory. The robins still love the elms of New England villages at sundown. There is enough of the thrush in them to make song inevitable at the end of the day, and enough of the tramp to make them hang round the dwellings of men. A robin, like many another American, dearly loves a white house with green blinds. Concord is still full of them.

Your fellow-townsmen were stirring abroad—not many afoot, most of them in their cars; and the sound which they made in Concord at evening was a rustling and a whispering. The sound lacks steadfastness and is wholly unlike that of a train. A train, as you know who lived so near the Fitchburg line, whistles one or twice sadly and is gone, trailing a memory in smoke, soothing to ear and mind. Automobiles, skirting a village green, are like flies that have gained the inner ear—they buzz, cease, pause, start, shift, stop, halt, brake, and the whole effect is a nervous polytone curiously disturbing.

As I wandered along, the *toc toc* of ping pong balls drifted from an attic window. In front of the Reuben Brown house a Buick was drawn up. At the wheel, motionless, his hat upon his head, a man sat, listening to Amos and Andy on the radio (it is a drama of many scenes and without an end). The deep voice of Andrew Brown, emerging from the car, although it originated more than two hundred miles away, was unstrained by distance. When you used to sit on the shore of your

pond on Sunday morning, listening to the church bells of Acton and Concord, you were aware of the excellent filter of the intervening atmosphere. Science has attended to that, and sound now maintains its intensity without regard for distance. Properly sponsored, it goes on forever.

A fire engine, out for a trial spin, roared past Emerson's house, hot with readiness for public duty. Over the barn roofs the martins dipped and chattered. A swarthy daughter of an asparagus grower, in culottes, shirt, and bandanna, pedalled past on her bicycle. It was indeed a delicious evening, and I returned to the inn (I believe it was your house once) to rock with the old ladies on the concrete veranda.

Next morning early I started afoot for Walden, out Main Street and down Thoreau, past the depot and the Minuteman Chevrolet Agency. The morning was fresh, and in a bean field along the way I flushed an agriculturalist, quietly studying his beans. Thoreau Street soon joined Number 126, an artery of the State. We number our highways nowadays, our speed so great we can remember little of their quality or character and are lucky to remember their number. (Men have an indistinct notion that if they keep up this activity long enough all will at length ride somewhere, in next to no time.) Your pond is on 126.

I knew I must be nearing your woodland retreat when the Golden Pheasant lunchroom came into view—Sealtest ice cream, toasted sandwiches, hot frankfurters, waffles, tonics, and lunches. Were I the proprietor, I should add rice, Indian meal, and molasses—just for old time's sake. The Pheasant, incidentally, is for sale: a chance for some nature lover who wishes to set himself up beside a pond in the Concord atmosphere and live deliberately, fronting only the essential facts of life on Number 126. Beyond the Pheasant was a place called Walden Breezes, an oasis whose porch pillars were made of old green shutters sawed into lengths. On the porch was a distorting mirror, to give the traveler a comical image of him-

self, who had miraculously learned to gaze in an ordinary glass without smiling. Behind the Breezes, in a sunparched clearing, dwelt your philosophical descendants in their trailers, each trailer the size of your hut, but all grouped together for the sake of congeniality. Trailer people leave the city, as you did, to discover solitude and in any weather, at any hour of the day or night, to improve the nick of time; but they soon collect in villages and get bogged deeper in the mud than ever. The camp behind Walden Breezes was just rousing itself to the morning. The ground was packed hard under the heel, and the sun came through the clearing to bake the soil and enlarge the wry smell of cramped housekeeping. Cushman's bakery truck had stopped to deliver an early basket of rolls. A camp dog, seeing me in the road, barked petulantly. A man emerged from one of the trailers and set forth with a bucket to draw water from some forest tap.

Leaving the highway I turned off into the woods toward the pond, which was apparent through the foliage. The floor of the forest was strewn with dried old oak leaves and *Transcripts*. From beneath the flattened popcorn wrapper (*granum explosum*) peeped the frail violet. I followed a footpath and descended to the water's edge. The pond lay clear and blue in the morning light, as you have seen it so many times. In the shallows a man's waterlogged shirt undulated gently. A few flies came out to greet me and convoy me to your cove, past the No Bathing signs on which the fellows and girls had scrawled their names. I felt strangely excited suddenly to be snooping around your premises, tiptoeing along watchfully, as though not to tread by mistake upon the intervening century. Before I got to the cove I heard something which seemed to me quite wonderful: I heard your frog, a full, clear, *troonk*, guiding me, still hoarse and solemn, bridging the years as the robins had bridged them in the sweetness of the village evening. But he soon quit, and I came on a couple of young boys throwing stones at him.

Your front yard is marked by a bronze tablet set in a stone. Four small granite posts, a few feet away, show where the house was. On top of the tablet was a pair of faded blue bathing trunks with a white stripe. Back of it is a pile of stones, a heap of stones, Henry. In fact the hillside itself seems faded, brow-beaten; a few tall skinny pines, bare of lower limbs, a smattering of young maples in suitable green, some birches and oaks, and a number of trees felled by the last big wind. It was from the bole of one of these fallen pines, torn up by the roots, that I extracted the stone which I added to the cairn—a sentimental act in which I was interrupted by a small terrier from a nearby picnic group, who confronted me and wanted to know about the stone.

I sat down for a while on one of the posts of your house to listen to the bluebottles and the dragonflies. The invaded glade sprawled shabby and mean at my feet, but the flies were tuned to the old vibration. There were the remains of a fire in your ruins, but I doubt that it was yours; also two beer bottles trodden into the soil and become part of earth. A young oak had taken root in your house, and two or three ferns, unrolling like the ticklers at a banquet. The only other furnishings were a DuBarry pattern sheet, a page torn from a picture magazine, and some crusts in wax paper.

Before I quit I walked round the pond and found the place where you used to sit on the northeast side to get the sun in the fall, and the beach where you got sand for scrubbing your floor. On the eastern side of the pond, where the highway borders it, the State has built dressing rooms for swimmers, a float with diving towers, drinking fountains of porcelain, and rowboats for hire. The pond is in fact a State Preserve, and carries a twenty-dollar fine for picking wild flowers, a decree signed in all solemnity by your fellow-citizens Walter C. Wardell, Erson B. Barlow, and Nathaniel I. Bowditch. There was a smell of creosote where they had been building a wide wooden stairway to the road and the parking area. Swimmers

and boaters were arriving; bodies splashed vigorously into the water and emerged wet and beautiful in the bright air. As I left, a boatload of town boys were splashing about in midpond, kidding and fooling, the young fellows singing at the tops of their lungs in a wild chorus:

Amer-ica, Amer-ica, God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
from sea to shi-ning sea!

I walked back to town along the railroad, following your custom. The rails were expanding noisily in the hot sun, and on the slope of the roadbed the wild grape and the blackberry sent up their creepers to the track.

The expense of my brief sojourn in Concord was:

Canvas Shoes	\$1.95	} gifts to take back to a boy
Baseball bat	25	
Left-handed fielder's glove	1.25	
Hotel and meals	4.25	
In all	<u>\$7.70</u>	

As you see, this amount was almost what you spent for food for eight months. I cannot defend the shoes or the expenditure for shelter and food; they reveal a meanness and grossness in my nature which you would find contemptible. The baseball equipment, however, is the sort of impediment with which you were never on even terms. You must remember that the house where you practiced the sort of economy which I respect was haunted only by mice and squirrels. You never had to cope with a shortstop.

## Savat

REBECCA WEST

THE ROAD RUNS along the coast between rocky banks dripping with the golden hair of broom. The hillside above and below us was astonishing in its fertility, although even here the rain was diluting the spring to a quarter of its proper strength. There was everywhere the sweet-smelling scrub, and thickets of oleander, and the grey-blue swords of aloes; and on the lower slopes were olive terraces and lines of cypresses, spurting up with a vitality strange to see in what is black and not green. Oaks there were—the name Dubrovnik means a grove of oaks; and where there were some square yards of level ground there were thick-trunked patriarchal planes, with branches enough to cover an army of concubines. The sea looked poverty-stricken, because, being here without islands, it had no share in this feast served up by the rising sap. There was presented a vision of facility, of effortless growth as the way to salvation. This coast, in ancient times, was a centre of the cult of Pan.

There were, however, other interesting residents of a supernatural character. Somewhere up in the mountains on this road is the cave in which Cadmus and his wife suffered their metamorphosis. They were so distressed by the misfortunes of

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their children, who were persecuted by Hera, that they begged the gods to turn them into snakes. Ovid made a lovely verse of it. When Cadmus had suffered the change

. . . . ille suae lambebat coniugis ora  
inque sinus caros, veluti cognosceret, ibat  
et dabat amplexus adsuetaque colla petebat.  
quisquis adest (aderant comites), terrentur; at illa  
lubrica permulcet cristati colla draconis,  
et subito duo sunt iunctoque volumine serpunt,  
donec in adpositi nemoris subiere latebras,  
nunc quoque nec fugiunt hominem nec vulnere laedunt  
quidque prius fuerint, placidi meminere dracones.<sup>1</sup>

It is an apt symbol of the numbness that comes on the broken-hearted. They become wise; they find comfort in old companionship; but they lose the old human anatomy, the sensations no longer follow the paths of the nerves, the muscles no longer offer their multifold reaction to the behests of the brain, there is no longer a stout fortress of bones, there is nothing but a long, sliding, writhing sorrow. But what happened to Cadmus was perhaps partly contrived by the presiding deity of the coast, for he was the arch-enemy of Pan, since he invented letters. He made humankind eat of the tree of knowledge; he made joy and sorrow dangerous because he furnished the means of commemorating them, that is to say of analysing them, of being appalled by them.

That was not an end of the strange events on the coast. We learn from St. Jerome's life of St. Hilarion that when (in the fourth century) the holy man went to Epidaurus, which was a

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<sup>1</sup> "He licked his wife's face, and crept into her dear familiar breasts, enfolded her and sought the throat he knew so well. All who were there—for they had friends with them—shuddered with horror. But she stroked the sleek neck of the crested reptile, and all at once there were two snakes there with intertwining coils, which after a little while glided away into the woods near by. Now, as when they were human, they neither fear men nor wound them and are gentle creatures, who still remember what they were."

town founded by the Greeks not far from here, he found the whole district terrorized by a monster living in a cave near by, who could draw peasants and shepherds to his lair by his breath. It was certainly Cadmus; literature has always found readers. St. Hilarion went to the mouth of the cave and made the sign of the cross and bade the dragon come forth. It obeyed and followed the saint as meekly as might be back to Epidaurus: all literature worth naming is an expression of the desire to be saved. There the saint said to the townspeople, "Build a pyre"; and when they had done that, he said to the dragon, "Lie down on that pyre." It obeyed. The townspeople set the pyre alight, and it lay quietly till it was burned to ashes. Without doubt it was Cadmus, it was literature. It knew that it was not a dragon, it was a phoenix and would rise restored and young from its ashes; it knew that pagan literature was dying and Christian literature was being born.

Since then Epidaurus has changed its name twice. It was destroyed by the barbarians in the seventh century and its population fled ten miles further north and founded Dubrovnik, or Ragusa. But after a time some stragglers returned to the ruins of the sacked city and built another of a simpler sort, which came to be known as Ragusa Vecchia. Now it is called Savtat, which is said to be a Slavonic version of the word "*civitas*." We stopped there and found that the story about St. Hilarion and the dragon was perfectly true. It cannot be doubted. The town lies on a double-humped dromedary of a peninsula, and the road can be seen where the dragon trotted along behind the saint, looking as mild as milk but sustained by its inner knowledge that not only was it to be reborn from the flames, but that those who kindled them were to know something about death on their own account. It was aware that when we visited the scene fifteen hundred years later we should be able to see in our mind's eye the tall villas which it passed on the way to its martyrdom, and the elegant and serious people who held their torches to the pyre; and it knew

why. It knew that one day the sailors and crofters would come to live among the ruins of the town and would delve among the burnt and shattered villas and take what they would of sculptures and bas-reliefs to build up their cottage walls, where they can be seen today, flowers in the buttonhole of poverty. It knew that the peasants' spades would one day attack a part of the peninsula which, in the Greek town, had been the jewellers' quarter; and that afterwards intaglios on the hungry breasts and rough fingers of people who had never known what it was to satisfy necessity, would evoke a dead world of elegant and serious ladies and gentlemen, otherwise sunk without trace. "Lie down," St. Hilarion was obliged to say to the dragon, "lie down, and stop laughing."

Yet even that was not the last event to happen here as it does nowhere else. Two seafaring families of this place became rich and famous shipowners, and just after the war a woman who had been born into the one and had married into the other conceived the desire that Mestrovitch should build a mausoleum for herself, her father, her mother, and her brother. She held long discussions with the sculptor, and then she and her father and her brother all died suddenly, for no very probable medical reason; and the mother had only time to make the final arrangements for the execution of the plan before she joined them. There is something splendid and Slav about this. They had resolved to provoke an analysis of death by their own deaths, and hastened to carry out their resolution.

Mestrovitch made the mausoleum in the form of a Chapel of Our Lady of the Angels, standing among the cypresses in the cemetery on one of the two summits of the peninsula. It is characteristic of him in the uncertainty with which it gropes after forms: there are some terrible errors, such as four boy musician angels who recall the horrid Japaneseries of Aubrey Beardsley. There is no getting over the troublesome facts that the Turkish occupation sterilized South Slav art for five hun-

dred years, and that when it struggled back to creativeness it found itself separated by Philistine Austria from all the artistic achievements that the rest of Europe had been making in the meantime. But there are moments in the Chapel which exquisitely illustrate the theory, the only theory that renders the death of the individual not a source of intolerable grief: the theory that the goodness of God stretches under human destiny like the net below trapeze artists at the circus. The preservation offered is not of a sort that humanity would dare to offer; a father would be lynched if he should do so badly for his son. Yet to die, and to know a meaning in death, is a better destiny than to be saved from dying. This discussion Mestrovitch carries on not by literary suggestion, but as a sculptor should, by use of form.

But this coast belongs to Pan. In this mausoleum Cadmus goes too far, he delves into matters which the natural man would forget and ignore, and he is punished. The sexton in charge of this cemetery, whose work it is to show visitors the tomb, is a cheerful soul who has taken up mortuary interests as if they were football or racing. He has himself tried his hand at sculpture, and his carvings are all excruciating parodies of Mestrovitch, criticisms which none of his enemies have ever surpassed in venom; and, as every artist knows, there are tortures which a dragon dreads far more than the pyre.

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## 5. FAMILIAR ESSAYS

### COMMENT

Of all the terms for the categories into which critics and editors put essays, "Familiar Essays" is probably the most difficult to define. Yet it is also one of the most frequently used. It means something, but what?

Part of the difficulty arises from the fact that at first glance there seems to be little resemblance among the essays placed in this category. Some are narratives. Some are descriptions of people or places. Some are reflections on human problems past and present. All have as part of their purpose the representation and interpretation of aspects of life in a way that has aesthetic interest, but beyond this they appear to have nothing in common. Why not simply distribute them among the categories already set up?

It would be possible to do so, of course, and they would not seem to differ greatly from the essays about them in their new positions. But when we examine them more closely we find that there is a trait that they have in common which justifies grouping them together: an unusual emphasis upon tone and upon the means of expressing it. This emphasis appears in three ways: (a) a seemingly deliberate effort to interest (and sometimes even to startle) the reader by the nature of the tone and the means of expressing it; (b) an interpretation and an evaluation of the subject which are more than usually dependent upon and expressed through the tone; and (c) a noticeable prominence of a specific narrator and a deliberate exploitation of his personality as material in the essay. The narrator need not appear directly in the essay—though he does more in the familiar essay than in most of the others—yet the selection and arrangement of the details and the emphasis upon tone are such that we are aware of him at all times. We must be careful not to insist that the essayist himself is the narrator, even in essays written in the first person; for, unless the essayist takes pain so to identify himself, we cannot know whether he is or not. Sometimes over many years an essayist will present a particularly consistent, definite, and interesting personality in his works, and readers come to associate

this personality with the essayist's name so frequently that it is hard for them even to consider the possibility that the essayist might actually be quite a different person. This is true with readers steeped in the works of Walton, Swift, Steele, Lamb, Thoreau, De Quincey, Chesterton, or Thurber. They often remember and enjoy the personalities in the essays by these men long after they have forgotten the details among which these personalities first appeared, and they simply give them the essayists' names.

The emphasis on tone, the part it plays in the interpretation and evaluation, and the personality of the narrator—these break down formal barriers and establish an atmosphere of intimacy; these make the essay "familiar." But tone and personality are elusive elements, and there is always something elusive about good familiar essays in which they predominate. The best effects are often achieved by indirection, and the integration may be exceptionally close, making it difficult to detach and examine separately the smaller details and technical features. The training received and the taste cultivated in reading the other essays in the collection will be particularly useful here. But though they may require very close study, the familiar essays make a pleasant ending to our work, and they amply repay all the effort we have given to learning the nature and uses of purpose, tone, points of view, images, and other elements of the genre.

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# Of Studies

SIR FRANCIS BACON

STUDIES SERVE for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshaling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affection; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important argu-

ments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend: *Abeunt studia in mores!* Nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathetmatics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen; for they are *cymini sectores!* If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

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## On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth

WILLIAM HAZLITT

NO YOUNG MAN believes he shall ever die. It was a saying of my brother's, and a fine one. There is a feeling of Eternity in youth which makes us amends for everything. To be young is to be as one of the Immortals. One-half of time indeed is spent—the other half remains in store for us with all its countless treasures, for there is no line drawn, and we see no limit to our hopes and wishes. We make the coming age our own—

The vast, the unbounded prospect lies before us.

Death, old age, are words without a meaning, a dream, a fiction, with which we have nothing to do. Others may have undergone, or may still undergo them—we “bear a charmed life,” which laughs to scorn all such idle fancies. As, in setting out on a delightful journey, we strain our eager sight forward,

Bidding the lovely scenes at distance hail,

and see no end to prospect after prospect, new objects presenting themselves as we advance, so in the outset of life we see no end to our desires nor to the opportunities of gratifying them. We have as yet found no obstacle, no disposition to flag, and it seems that we can go on so forever. We look round in a new world, full of life and motion, and ceaseless progress, and feel in ourselves all the vigor and spirit to keep pace with it, and do

not foresee from any present signs how we shall be left behind in the race, decline into old age, and drop into the grave. It is the simplicity and, as it were, abstractedness of our feelings in youth that (so to speak) identifies us with nature and (our experience being weak and our passions strong) makes us fancy ourselves immortal like it. Our short-lived connection with being, we fondly flatter ourselves, is an indissoluble and lasting union. As infants smile and sleep, we are rocked in the cradle of our desires, and hushed into fancied security by the roar of the universe around us—we quaff the cup of life with eager thirst without draining it, and joy and hope seem ever mantling to the brim—objects press around us, filling the mind with their magnitude and with the throng of desires that wait upon them, so that there is no room for the thoughts of death. We are too much dazzled by the gorgeousness and novelty of the bright waking dream about us to discern the dim shadow lingering for us in the distance. Nor would the hold that life has taken of us permit us to detach our thoughts that way, even if we could. We are too much absorbed in present objects and pursuits. While the spirit of youth remains unimpaired, ere “the wine of life is drunk,” we are like people intoxicated or in a fever, who are hurried away by the violence of their own sensations: it is only as present objects begin to pall upon the sense, as we have been disappointed in our favorite pursuits, cut off from our closest ties, that we by degrees become weaned from the world, that passion loosens its hold upon futurity, and that we begin to contemplate as in a glass darkly the possibility of parting with it for good. Till then, the example of others has no effect upon us. Casualties we avoid; the slow approaches of age we play at *hide and seek* with. Like the foolish fat scullion in Sterne, who hears that Master Bobby is dead, our only reflection is, “So am not I!” The idea of death, instead of staggering our confidence, only seems to strengthen and enhance our sense of the possession and enjoyment of life. Others may fall around us like leaves, or be mowed down by the scythe of

Time like grass: these are but metaphors to the unreflecting, buoyant ears and overweening presumption of youth. It is not till we see the flowers of Love, Hope, and Joy withering around us, that we give up the flattering delusions that before led us on, and that the emptiness and dreariness of the prospect before us reconciles us hypothetically to the silence of the grave.

Life is indeed a strange gift, and its privileges are most mysterious. No wonder when it is first granted to us, that our gratitude, our admiration, and our delight should prevent us from reflecting on our own nothingness, or from thinking it will ever be recalled. Our first and strongest impressions are borrowed from the mighty scene that is opened to us, and we unconsciously transfer its durability as well as its splendor to ourselves. So newly found, we cannot think of parting with it yet, or at least put off that consideration *sine die*. Like a rustic at a fair, we are full of amazement and rapture, and have no thought of going home, or that it will soon be night. We know our existence only by ourselves, and confound our knowledge with the objects of it. We and Nature are therefore one. Otherwise the illusion, the "feast of reason and the flow of soul," to which we are invited, is a mockery and a cruel insult. We do not go from a play till the last act is ended, and the lights are about to be extinguished. But the fairy face of Nature still shines on: shall we be called away before the curtain falls, or ere we have scarce had a glimpse of what is going on? Like children, our stepmother Nature holds us up to see the raree-show of the universe, and then, as if we were a burden to her to support, lets us fall down again. Yet what brave sublunary things does not this pageant present, like a ball or *fête* of the universe!

To see the golden sun, the azure sky, the outstretched ocean; to walk upon the green earth, and be lord of a thousand creatures; to look down yawning precipices or over distant sunny vales; to see the world spread out under one's feet on a map; to bring the stars near; to view the smallest insects through a microscope; to read history, and consider the revolutions of

empire and the successions of generations; to hear the glory of Tyre, of Sidon, of Babylon, and of Susa, and to say all these were before me and are now nothing; to say I exist in such a point of time, and in such a point of space; to be a spectator and a part of its ever-moving scene; to witness the change of season, of spring and autumn, of winter and summer; to feel hot and cold, pleasure and pain, beauty and deformity, right and wrong; to be sensible to the accidents of nature; to consider the mighty world of eye and ear; to listen to the stock-dove's notes amid the forest deep; to journey over moor and mountain; to hear the midnight sainted choir; to visit lighted halls, or the cathedral's gloom, or sit in crowded theaters and see life itself mocked; to study the works of art and refine the sense of beauty to agony; to worship fame, and to dream of immortality; to look upon the Vatican, and to read Shakespeare; to gather up the wisdom of the ancients, and to pry into the future; to listen to the trump of war, the shout of victory; to question history as to the movements of the human heart; to seek for truth; to plead the cause of humanity; to overlook the world as if time and nature poured their treasures at our feet—to be and to do all this, and then in a moment to be nothing—to have it all snatched from us as by a juggler's trick, or a phantasmagoria! There is something in this transition from all to nothing that shocks us and damps the enthusiasm of youth new flushed with hope and pleasure, and we cast the comfortless thought as far from us as we can. In the first enjoyment of the state of life we discard the fear of debts and duns, and never think of the final payment of our great debt to Nature. Art we know is long; life, we flatter ourselves, should be so too. We see no end of the difficulties and delays we have to encounter: perfection is slow of attainment, and we must have time to accomplish it in. The fame of the great names we look up to is immortal: and shall not we who contemplate it imbibe a portion of ethereal fire, the *divinæ particula auræ*, which nothing can extinguish? A wrinkle in Rembrandt or in

Nature takes whole days to resolve itself into its component parts, its softenings and its sharpnesses; we refine upon our perfections, and unfold the intricacies of Nature. What a prospect for the future! What a task have we not begun! And shall we be arrested in the middle of it? We do not count our time thus employed lost, or our pains thrown away; we do not flag or grow tired, but gain new vigor at our endless task. Shall Time, then, grudge us to finish what we have begun, and have formed a compact with Nature to do? Why not fill up the blank that is left us in this manner? I have looked for hours at a Rembrandt without being conscious of the flight of time, but with ever new wonder and delight, have thought that not only my own but another existence I could pass in the same manner. This rarefied, refined existence seemed to have no end, nor stint, nor principle of decay in it. The print would remain long after I who looked on it had become the prey of worms. The thing seems in itself out of all reason: health, strength, appetite are opposed to the idea of death, and we are not ready to credit it till we have found our illusions vanished, and our hopes grown cold. Objects in youth, from novelty, etc., are stamped upon the brain with such force and integrity that one thinks nothing can remove or obliterate them. They are riveted there, and appear to us as an element of our nature. It must be a mere violence that destroys them, not a natural decay. In the very strength of this persuasion we seem to enjoy an age by anticipation. We melt down years into a single moment of intense sympathy, and by anticipating the fruits defy the ravages of time. If, then, a single moment of our lives is worth years, shall we set any limits to its total value and extent? Again, does it not happen that so secure do we think ourselves of an indefinite period of existence, that at times, when left to ourselves, and impatient of novelty, we feel annoyed at what seems to us the slow and creeping progress of time, and argue that if it always moves at this tedious snail's pace it will never come to an end? How ready are we to sacrifice any space of time which separates

us from a favorite object, little thinking that before long we shall find it move too fast.

For my part, I started in life with the French Revolution, and I have lived, alas! to see the end of it. But I did not foresee this result. My sun arose with the first dawn of liberty, and I did not think how soon both must set. The new impulse to ardor given to men's minds imparted a congenial warmth and glow to mine; we were strong to run a race together, and I little dreamed that long before mine was set, the sun of liberty would turn to blood, or set once more in the night of despotism. Since then, I confess, I have no longer felt myself young, for with that my hopes fell.

I have since turned my thoughts to gathering up some of the fragments of my early recollections, and putting them into a form to which I might occasionally revert. The future was barred to my progress, and I turned for consolation and encouragement to the past. It is thus that, while we find our personal and substantial identity vanishing from us, we strive to gain a reflected and vicarious one in our thoughts: we do not like to perish wholly, and wish to bequeath our names, at least, to posterity. As long as we can make our cherished thoughts and nearest interests live in the minds of others, we do not appear to have retired altogether from the stage. We still occupy the breasts of others, and exert an influence and power over them, and it is only our bodies that are reduced to dust and powder. Our favorite speculations still find encouragement, and we make as great a figure in the eye of the world, or perhaps a greater, than in our lifetime. The demands of our self-love are thus satisfied, and these are the most imperious and unremitting. Besides, if by our intellectual superiority we survive ourselves in this world, by our virtues and faith we may attain an interest in another, and a higher state of being, and may thus be recipients at the same time of men and of angels.

E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

As we grow old, our sense of the value of time becomes vivid. Nothing else, indeed, seems of any consequence. We can never cease wondering that that which has ever been should cease to be. We find many things remain the same: why then should there be change in us. This adds a convulsive grasp of whatever is, a sense of a fallacious hollowness in all we see. Instead of the full, pulpy feeling of youth tasting existence and every object in it, all is flat and vapid,—a whited sepulcher, fair without but full of ravening and all uncleanness within. The world is a witch that puts us off with false shows and appearances. The simplicity of youth, the confiding expectation, the boundless raptures, are gone: we only think of getting out of it as well as we can, and without any great mischance or annoyance. The flush of illusion, even the complacent retrospect of past joys and hopes, is over: if we can slip out of life without indignity, can escape with little bodily infirmity, and frame our minds to the calm and respectable composure of *still-life* before we return to physical nothingness, it is as much as we can expect. We do not die wholly at our deaths: we have moldered away gradually long before. Faculty after faculty, interest after interest, attachment after attachment disappear: we are torn from ourselves while living, year after year sees us no longer the same, and death only consigns the last fragment of what we were to the grave. That we should wear out by slow stages, and dwindle at last into nothing, is not wonderful, when even in our prime our strongest impressions leave little trace but for the moment, and we are the creatures of petty circumstance. How little effect is made on us in our best days by the books we have read, the scenes we have witnessed, the sensations we have gone through! Think only of the feelings we experienced in reading a fine romance (one of Sir Walter's, for instance); what beauty, what sublimity, what interest, what heart-rending emotions! You would suppose the feelings you then experienced would last forever, or subdue the mind to their own harmony and tone: while we are reading it seems as if nothing

could ever put us out of our way, or trouble us:—the first splash of mud that we get on entering the street, the first twopence we are cheated out of, the feeling vanishes clean out of our minds, and we become the prey of petty and annoying circumstance. The mind soars to the lofty: it is at home in the groveling, the disagreeable, and the little. And yet we wonder that age should be feeble and querulous,—that the freshness of youth should fade away. Both worlds would hardly satisfy the extravagance of our desires and of our presumption.

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## On the Pleasures of No Longer Being Very Young

G . K . CHESTERTON

THERE ARE advantages in the advance through middle age into later life which are very seldom stated in a sensible way. Generally, they are stated in a sentimental way; in a general suggestion that all old men are equipped with beautiful snowy beards like Father Christmas and rejoice in unfathomable wisdom like Nestor. All this has caused the young people to be sceptical about the real advantages of the old people, and the true statement of those advantages sounds like a paradox. I would not say that old men grow wise, for men never grow wise; and many old men retain a very attractive childishness and cheerful innocence. Elderly people are often much more romantic than young people, and sometimes even more adventurous, having begun to realize how many things they do not know. It is a true proverb, no doubt, which says "There is no fool like an old fool." Perhaps there is no fool who is half so happy in his own fool's paradise. But, however this may be, it is true that the advantages of maturity are not those which are generally urged even in praise of it, and when they are truly urged they sound like an almost comic contradiction.

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For instance, one pleasure attached to growing older is that many things seem to be growing younger; growing fresher and more lively than we once supposed them to be. We begin to see significance, or (in other words) to see life, in a large number of traditions, institutions, maxims, and codes of manners that seem in our first days to be dead. A young man grows up in a world that often seems to him intolerably old. He grows up among proverbs and precepts that appear to be quite stiff and senseless. He seems to be stuffed with stale things; to be given the stones of death instead of the bread of life; to be fed on the dust of the dead past; to live in a town of tombs. It is a very natural mistake, but it is a mistake. The advantage of advancing years lies in discovering that traditions are true, and therefore alive; indeed, a tradition is not even traditional except when it is alive. It is great fun to find out that the world has not repeated proverbs because they are proverbial, but because they are practical. Until I owned a dog, I never knew what is meant by the proverb about letting a sleeping dog lie, or the fable about the dog in the manger. Now those dead phrases are quite alive to me, for they are parts of a perfectly practical psychology. Until I went to live in the country, I had no notion of the meaning of the maxim, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good." Now it seems to me as pertinent and even pungent as if it were a new remark just made to me by a neighbour at the garden gate. It is something to come to live in a world of living and significant things instead of dead and unmeaning things. And it is youth in revolt, even in righteous revolt, which sees its surroundings as dead and unmeaning. It is old age, and even second childhood, that has come to see that everything means something and that life itself has never died.

For instance, we have just seen a staggering turn of the wheel of fortune which has brought all the modern material pride and prosperity to a standstill.<sup>1</sup> America, which a year or two

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<sup>1</sup> This essay was written in the early thirties.

ago seemed to have become one vast Eldorado studded with cities of gold, is almost as much embarrassed as England, and really much more embarrassed than Ireland. The industrial countries are actually finding it difficult to be industrial, while the old agricultural countries still find it possible to be industrious. Now, I do not pretend to have prophesied or expected this, for a man may cheerfully call a thing rotten without really expecting it to rot. But neither, certainly, did the young, the progressive, the prosperous, or the adventurous expect it. Yet all history and culture is stiff with proverbs and prophecies telling them to expect it. The trouble is that they thought the proverbs and history a great deal too stiff. Again and again, with monotonous reiteration, both my young friends and myself had been told from childhood that fortune is fickle, that riches take to themselves wings and fly, that power can depart suddenly from the powerful, that pride goes before a fall, and insolence attracts the thunderbolt of the gods. But it was all unmeaning to us, and all the proverbs seemed stiff and stale, like dusty labels on neglected antiquities. We had heard of the fall of Wolsey, which was like the crash of a huge palace, still faintly rumbling through the ages; we had read of it in the words of Shakespeare, which possibly were not written by Shakespeare; we had learned them and learned nothing from them. We had read ten thousand times, to the point of tedium, of the difference between the Napoleon of Marengo and the Napoleon of Moscow; but we should never have expected Moscow if we had been looking at Marengo. We knew that Charles the Fifth resigned his crown, or that Charles the First lost his head; and we should have duly remarked "*Sic transit gloria mundi*," after the incident, but not before it. We had been told that the Roman Empire declined, or that the Spanish Empire disintegrated; but no German ever really applied it to the German Empire, and no Briton to the British Empire. The very repetition of these truths will sound like the old interminable repetition of the truisms. And yet they are to me,

at this moment, like amazing and startling discoveries, for I have lived to see the dead proverbs come alive.

This, like so many of the realizations of later life, is quite impossible to convey in words to anybody who has not reached it in this way. It is like a difference of dimension or plane, in which something which the young have long looked at, rather wearily, as a diagram has suddenly become a solid. It is like the indescribable transition from the inorganic to the organic; as if the stone snakes and birds of some ancient Egyptian inscription began to leap about like living things. The thing was a dead maxim when we were alive with youth. It becomes a living maxim when we are nearer to death. Even as we are dying, the whole world is coming to life.

Another paradox is this: that it is not the young people who realize the new world. The moderns do not realize modernity. They have never known anything else. They have stepped on to a moving platform which they hardly know to be moving, as a man cannot feel the daily movement of the earth. But he would feel it sharp enough if the earth suddenly moved the other way. The older generation consists of those who do remember a time when the world moved the other way. They do feel sharply and clearly the epoch which is beginning, for they were there before it began. It is one of the artistic advantages of the aged that they do see the new things relived sharply against a background, their shape definite and distinct. To the young these new things are often themselves the background, and are hardly seen at all. Hence, even the most intelligent of innovators is often strangely mistaken about the nature of innovation and the things that are really new. And the Oldest Inhabitant will often indulge in a senile chuckle, as he listens to the Village Orator proclaiming that the village church will soon be swept away and replaced by a factory for chemicals. For the Oldest Inhabitant knows very well that nobody went to church in the days of his childhood except out of snobbishness, and that it is in his old age that the church has begun

once more to be thronged with believers. In my capacity of Oldest Inhabitant (with senile chuckle), I will give one instance of a kindred kind. A man must be at least as old as I am in order to remember how utterly idiotic, inconceivable, and crazily incredible it once seemed that any educated or even reasonable shrewd person should confess that he believed in *ghosts*. You must be nearly the Oldest Inhabitant to know with what solid scorn and certainty the squire and the parson denied the possibility of the village ghost; the parson even more emphatically than the squire. The village ghost was instantly traced to the village drunkard or the village liar. Educated people *knew* that the dead do not return in the world of sense. Those who remember those times, and have lived to see a man of science like Sir Oliver Lodge founding quite a fashionable religion, are amused to hear a young man say the world is moving away from the supernatural. They know in what direction it has really moved.

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## The Corruption of Comfort

CARL VAN DOREN

SOMEONE lately asked me by what image I would represent the age that began with the use of steam and ended with the World War. I was not sure that any age had actually ended then, but an image did occur to me. It came from the story of the fisherman in the *Thousand Nights and a Night* who let the Jinni out of the jar and then found him fierce and uncontrollable. But upon second thought I saw that the image was not accurate: the fisherman by using his wits did persuade the spirit back into his copper prison and made a bargain with him which saved the man from death. Then another image occurred to me. It was that of a crew of pirates who chanced upon an unexpected island and there found such incalculable treasure that they went mad with their good fortune, raged up and down the island, extended their fury to a whole archipelago, and at last wound up in a debauch of robbery and slaughter. But neither did this image satisfy me: the people of the last age were not criminals to start with; they were as virtuous as those of any other age on—or not on—record. A better image would be that of some tribe of anthropoids who, after long subsisting on a more or less difficult plane of life, suddenly got hold of a hundred tricks and secrets which gave them power

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over earth, air, fire, and water, endowing them with human riches without human disciple.

And yet it is less than fair to make this distinction between men and their lagging cousins of the treetops. Not monkeys too abruptly promoted to be men but men come too abruptly into wealth—that is the analogy. Thinking in terms of the long history of the race, look what happened. Never before, to put it broadly, had men been warm enough except in those regions of the earth where the sun warmed them; now they dug up mountains of coal and drew off rivers of oil and fashioned whole atmospheres of gas for fuel; and with these, besides warming themselves, they made such tools and weapons as had not even been dreamed of. Never before, still to put it broadly, had men had food enough, now they discovered how to coax unprecedented crops out of the soil and how to breed new armies of beasts to be devoured and how to catch what the depths of forests and oceans had hitherto denied them and how to create all sorts of novel foods by manufacture. Never before had men, except in dangerous, communal migrations, moved much from their native places; now they made vehicles and ships to go like the wind and in time took to the wind itself for their trafficking until restless tides of human life flowed here and there over the surface of the earth as if men and nations had no such things as homes. Long naked, they covered themselves with preposterous garments and strutted up and down; long hungry, they stuffed their bellies till they were sick with surfeit; long home-bound, they ran wild till they were lost.

Meanwhile their minds could not keep pace with this enormous increase of their goods. Their ancestors, it may be guessed, had taken centuries to accustom themselves to the use of fire and of the successive machines they had invented; they had taken centuries to find out those parts of the earth they knew. In the last age such processes were accelerated to a dash and a scramble. Things poured in upon minds and overwhelmed them. The century in retrospect has a bewil-

dered look, like a baby at a circus: some art which it could hardly comprehend had brought a universe into a tumbling, twisting focus and the century's head ached with the effort to find a meaning in it. To vertigo succeeded what was probably an actual madness of the race—but a madness with the least possible method. Everywhere a wild activity occupied the faculties of those who followed affairs; and—though the finest intelligences dissented—among the sophists who encouraged such activity was an even greater frenzy of bewilderment.

Call what happened the corruption of comfort. Men had so long been cold and starved and isolated that they clutched at the chance to wrest every advantage from stubborn nature, and they clutched it faster than they could put it to sound uses. Discomfort was one of the penalties of their madness. Nerves in the loud din of the new age learned new agonies. Confusions grew and desperations thrived till the whole earth was on a tension out of which anything might develop. What did develop was the war which wrapped the world in horror. To ascribe it to this or that particular cause or guilt is to see it in terms too small. The race of man was gorged and could not digest its meal; it was drunk and could not control its motions; it was mad and could not understand its course. In the long run the observer of mankind must look back upon the last age as one of the several moments in the history of the race when it has blundered into mania and cruelly hurt itself before it could find its head again.

The race is very old and it doubtless has many moons still to live before the cooling of the planet sends it back to its aboriginal state. Nor is there use or sense in imagining that the race might return to the simpler conditions that existed before the era of superfluous things. Things are. Hope must be seen to lie in the direction of their assimilation by the human mind. Here and there different prophets insist that the mind is on the verge of some discovery as large as Columbus's which will establish a truer balance between it and the matter which now



outweighs it. But why put trust in miracles? The madness of the age is more likely to subside gradually, under quiet counsels, as the debauch wears out its influence. Slowly the mind must lift its faith in itself up above its temporary obsession with mere things. It must learn to hold and master all of them which are capable of being held and mastered. It must become accustomed to live among the rest of them as a mountaineer becomes accustomed to live in the city streets after the panic which overcomes him when first he enters them from the high silences and pure outlooks of his native hills.

## The Vicar of Lynch

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

WHEN I HEARD through country gossip of the strange happening at Lynch which had caused so great a scandal, and led to the disappearance of the deaf old Vicar of that remote village, I collected all the reports I could about it, for I felt that at the centre of this uncomprehending talk and wild anecdote there was something with more meaning than a mere sudden outbreak of blasphemy and madness.

It appeared that the old Vicar, after some years spent in the quiet discharge of his parochial duties, had been noticed to become more and more odd in his appearance and behaviour; and it was also said that he had gradually introduced certain alterations into the Church services. These had been vaguely supposed at the time to be of a High Church character, but afterwards they were put down to a growing mental derangement, which had finally culminated at that notorious Harvest Festival, when his career as a clergyman of the Church of England had ended. On this painful occasion the old man had come into church outlandishly dressed, and had gone through a service with chanted gibberish and unaccustomed gestures, and prayers which were unfamiliar to his congregation. There was also talk of a woman's figure on the altar, which the Vicar had unveiled at a solemn moment in this performance; and I

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also heard echo of other gossip—gossip that was, however, authoritatively contradicted and suppressed as much as possible—about the use of certain other symbols of a most unsuitable kind. Then a few days after the old man had disappeared—some of the neighbours believed that he was dead; some, that he was now shut up in an asylum for the insane.

Such was the fantastic and almost incredible talk I listened to, but in which, as I say, I found much more meaning than my neighbours. For one thing, although they knew that the Vicar had come from Oxford to this remote College living, they knew nothing of his work and scholarly reputation in that University, and none of them had probably ever heard of—much less read—an important book which he had written, and which was the standard work on his special subject. To them he was simply a deaf, eccentric, and solitary clergyman; and I think I was the only person in the neighbourhood who had conversed with him on the subject concerning which he was the greatest living authority in England.

For I had seen the old man once—curiously enough at the time of a Harvest Festival, though it was some years before the one which had led to his disappearance. Bicycling one day over the hills, I had ridden down into a valley of cornfields, and then, passing along an unfenced road that ran across a wide expanse of stubble, I came, after getting off to open three or four gates, upon a group of thatched cottages, with a little, unrestored Norman church standing among great elms. I left my bicycle and walked through the churchyard, and as I went into the church, through its deeply-recessed Norman doorway, a surprisingly pretty sight met my eyes. The dim, cool, little interior was set out and richly adorned with an abundance of fruit and vegetables, yellow gourds, apples and plums and golden wheat-sheaves, great loaves of bread, and garlands of September flowers. A shabby-looking old clergyman was standing on the top of a step-ladder, finishing the decorations, when I entered. As soon as he saw me he came down, and I spoke to

him, praising the decorations, and raising my voice a little, for I noticed that he was somewhat deaf. We talked of the Harvest Festival, and as I soon perceived that I was talking with a man of books and University education, I ventured to hint at what had vividly impressed me in that old, gaudily-decorated church—its pagan character, as if it were a rude archaic temple in some corner of the antique world, which had been adorned, two thousand years ago, by pious country folk for some local festival. The old clergyman was not in the least shocked by my remark; it seemed indeed rather to please him; there was, he agreed, something of a pagan character in the modern Harvest Festival—it was no doubt a bit of the old primitive Vegetation Ritual, the old Religion of the soil; a Festival, which, like so many others, had not been destroyed by Christianity, but absorbed into it, and given a new meaning. "Indeed," he added talking on as if the subject interested him, and expressing himself with a certain donnish carefulness of speech that I found pleasant to listen to, "the Harvest Festival is undoubtedly a survival of the prehistoric worship of that Corn Goddess who, in classical times, was called Demeter and Ioulo and Ceres, but whose cult as an Earth-Mother and Corn-Spirit is of much greater antiquity. For there is no doubt that this Vegetation Spirit has been worshipped from the earliest times by agricultural peoples; the wheat fields and ripe harvests being naturally suggestive of the presence amid the corn of a kindly Being, who, in return for due rites and offerings, will vouchsafe nourishing rains and golden harvests." He mentioned the references in Virgil, and the description in Theocritus of a Sicilian Harvest Festival—these were no doubt familiar to me; but if I was interested in the subject, I should find, he said, much more information collected in a book which he had written, but of which I had probably never heard, about the Vegetation Deities in Greek Religion. As it happened I knew the book, and felt now much interested in my chance meeting with the distinguished author; and after expressing this as best I

could, I rode off, promising to visit him again. This promise I was never able to fulfil; but when afterwards, on my return to the neighbourhood, I heard of that unhappy scandal, my memory of this meeting and our talk enabled me to form a theory as to what had really happened.

It seemed plain to me that the change had been too violent for this elderly scholar, taken from his books and college rooms and set down in the solitude of this remote valley, amid the richness and living sap of Nature. The gay spectacle, right under his old eyes, of growing shoots and budding foliage, of blossoming and flowering, and the ripening of fruits and crops, had little by little (such was my theory) unhinged his brains. More and more his thoughts had come to dwell, not on the doctrines of the Church in which he had long ago taken orders, but on the pagan rites which had formed his life-long study, and which had been the expression of a life not unlike the agricultural life amid which he now found himself living. So as his derangement grew upon him in his solitude, he had gradually transformed, with a maniac's cunning, the Christian services, and led his little congregation, all unknown to themselves, back toward their ancestral worship of the Corn-Goddess. At last he had thrown away all disguise, and had appeared as a hierophant of Demeter, dressed in a fawn skin, with a crown of poplar leaves, and pedantically carrying the mystic basket and the winnowing fan appropriate to these mysteries. The wheaten posset he offered the shocked communicants belonged to these also, and the figure of a woman on the altar was of course the holy Wheatsheaf, whose unveiling was the culminating point in that famous ritual.

It is much to be regretted that I could not recover full and more exact details of that celebration in which this great scholar had probably embodied his mature knowledge concerning a subject which has puzzled generations of students. But what powers of careful observation could one expect from a group of labourers and small farmers? Some of the things that

reached my ears I refused to believe—the mention of pig's blood for instance, and especially the talk of certain grosser symbols, which the choir boys, it was whispered, had carried about the church in ceremonious procession. Village people have strange imaginations; and to this event, growing more and more monstrous as they talked it over, they must themselves have added this grotesque detail. However, I have written to consult an Oxford authority on this interesting point, and he has been kind enough to explain at length that although at the *Haloa*, or winter festival of the Corn-Goddess, and also at the *Chloeia*, or festival in early spring, some symbolization of the reproductive powers of Nature would be proper and appropriate, it would have been quite out of place at the *Thalysia*, or autumn festival of thanksgiving. I feel certain that a solecism of this nature—the introduction into a particular rite of features not sanctioned by the texts—would have seemed a shocking thing, even to the unhinged mind of one who had always been so careful a scholar.

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## The Night the Bed Fell

JAMES THURBER

I SUPPOSE that the high-water mark of my youth in Columbus, Ohio, was the night the bed fell on my father. It makes a better recitation (unless, as some friends of mine have said, one has heard it five or six times) than it does a piece of writing, for it is almost necessary to throw furniture around, shake doors, and bark like a dog, to lend the proper atmosphere and verisimilitude to what is admittedly a somewhat incredible tale. Still, it did take place.

It happened, then, that my father had decided to sleep in the attic one night, to be away where he could think. My mother opposed the notion strongly because, she said, the old wooden bed up there was unsafe: it was wobbly and the heavy headboard would crash down on father's head in case the bed fell, and kill him. There was no dissuading him, however, and at a quarter past ten he closed the attic door behind him and went up the narrow twisting stairs. We later heard ominous creakings as he crawled into bed. Grandfather, who usually slept in the attic bed when he was with us, had disappeared some days before. (On these occasions he was usually gone six or eight days and returned growling and out of temper, with the news that the federal Union was run by a passel of block-

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heads and that the Army of the Potomac didn't have any more chance than a fiddler's bitch.)

We had visiting us at this time a nervous first cousin of mine named Briggs Beall, who believed that he was likely to cease breathing when he was asleep. It was his feeling that if he were not awakened every hour during the night, he might die of suffocation. He had been accustomed to setting an alarm clock to ring at intervals until morning, but I persuaded him to abandon this. He slept in my room and I told him that I was such a light sleeper that if anybody quit breathing in the same room with me, I would wake instantly. He tested me the first night—which I had suspected he would—by holding his breath after my regular breathing had convinced him I was asleep. I was not asleep, however, and called to him. This seemed to allay his fears a little, but he took the precaution of putting a glass of spirits of camphor on a little table at the head of his bed. In case I didn't arouse him until he was almost gone, he said, he would sniff the camphor, a powerful reviver. Briggs was not the only member of his family who had his crotchets. Old Aunt Melissa Beall (who could whistle like a man, with two fingers in her mouth) suffered under the premonition that she was destined to die on South High Street, because she had been born on South High Street and married on South High Street. Then there was Aunt Sarah Shoaf, who never went to bed at night without the fear that a burglar was going to get in and blow chloroform under her door through a tube. To avert this calamity—for she was in greater dread of anesthetics than of losing her household goods—she always piled her money, silverware, and other valuables in a neat stack just outside her bedroom, with a note reading: "This is all I have. Please take it and do not use your chloroform, as this is all I have." Aunt Gracie Shoaf also had a burglar phobia, but she met it with more fortitude. She was confident that burglars had been getting into her house every night for forty years. The fact that she never missed anything was to her no proof to the



contrary. She always claimed that she scared them off before they could take anything, by throwing shoes down the hallway. When she went to bed she piled, where she could get at them handily, all the shoes there were about her house. Five minutes after she had turned off the light, she would sit up in bed and say "Hark!" Her husband, who had learned to ignore the whole situation as long ago as 1903, would either be sound asleep or pretend to be sound asleep. In either case he would not respond to her tugging and pulling, so that presently she would arise, tiptoe to the door, open it slightly and heave a shoe down the hall in one direction and its mate down the hall in the other direction. Some nights she threw them all, some nights only a couple of pair.

But I am straying from the remarkable incidents that took place during the night that the bed fell on father. By midnight we were all in bed. The layout of the rooms and the disposition of their occupants is important to an understanding of what later occurred. In the front room upstairs (just under father's attic bedroom) were my mother and my brother Herman, who sometimes sang in his sleep, usually "Marching Through Georgia" or "Onward, Christian Soldiers." Briggs Beall and myself were in a room adjoining this one. My brother Roy was in a room across the hall from ours. Our bull terrier, Rex, slept in the hall.

My bed was an army cot, one of those affairs which are made wide enough to sleep on comfortably only by putting up, flat with the middle section, the two sides which ordinarily hang down like the sideboards of a drop-leaf table. When these sides are up, it is perilous to roll too far toward the edge, for then the cot is likely to tip completely over, bringing the whole bed down on top of one with a tremendous banging crash. This, in fact, is precisely what happened, about two o'clock in the morning. (It was my mother who, in recalling the scene later, first referred to it as "the night the bed fell on your father.")

Always a deep sleeper, slow to arouse (I had lied to Briggs), I was at first unconscious of what had happened when the iron cot rolled me onto the floor and toppled over on me. It left me still warmly bundled up and unhurt, for the bed rested above me like a canopy. Hence I did not wake up, only reached the edge of consciousness and went back. The racket, however, instantly awakened my mother, in the next room, who came to the immediate conclusion that her worst dread was realized: the big wooden bed upstairs had fallen on father. She therefore screamed, "Let's go to your poor father!" It was this shout, rather than the noise of my cot falling, that awakened my brother Herman, in the same room with her. He thought that mother had become, for no apparent reason, hysterical. "You're all right, mamma!" he shouted, trying to calm her. They exchanged shout for shout for perhaps ten seconds: "Let's go to your poor father!" and "You're all right!" That woke up Briggs. By this time I was conscious of what was going on, in a vague way, but did not yet realize that I was under my bed instead of on it. Briggs, awakening in the midst of loud shouts of fear and apprehension, came to the quick conclusion that he was suffocating and that we were all trying to "bring him out." With a low moan, he grasped the glass of camphor at the head of his bed and instead of sniffing it poured it over himself. The room reeked of camphor. "Ugf, ahfg!" choked Briggs, like a drowning man, for he had almost succeeded in stopping his breath under the deluge of pungent spirits. He leaped out of bed and groped toward the open window, but he came up against one that was closed. With his hand, he beat out the glass, and I could hear it crash and tinkle in the alley-way below. It was at this juncture that I, in trying to get up, had the uncanny sensation of feeling my bed above me! Foggy with sleep, I now suspected, in my turn, that the whole uproar was being made in a frantic endeavor to extricate me from what must be an unheard-of and perilous situation. "Get me out of this!" I bawled. "Get me out!" I think I had the nightmarish

belief that I was entombed in a mine. "Gugh!" gasped Briggs, floundering in his camphor.

By this time my mother, still shouting, pursued by Herman, still shouting, was trying to open the door to the attic, in order to go up and get my father's body out of the wreckage. The door was stuck, however, and wouldn't yield. Her frantic pulls on it only added to the general banging and confusion. Roy and the dog were now up, the one shouting questions, the other barking.

Father, farthest away and soundest sleeper of all, had by this time been awakened by the battering on the attic door. He decided that the house was on fire. "I'm coming, I'm coming!" he wailed in a slow, sleepy voice—it took him many minutes to regain full consciousness. My mother, still believing he was caught under the bed, detected in his "I'm coming!" the mournful, resigned note of one who is preparing to meet his Maker. "He's dying!" she shouted.

"I'm all right!" Briggs yelled, to reassure her. "I'm all right!" He still believed that it was his own closeness to death that was worrying mother. I found at last the light switch in my room, unlocked the door, and Briggs and I joined the others at the attic door. The dog, who never did like Briggs, jumped for him—assuming that he was the culprit in whatever was going on—and Roy had to throw Rex and hold him. We could hear father crawling out of bed upstairs. Roy pulled the attic door open, with a mighty jerk, and father came down the stairs, sleepy and irritable but safe and sound. My mother began to weep when she saw him. Rex began to howl. "What in the name of God is going on here?" asked father.

The situation was finally put together like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. Father caught a cold from prowling around in his bare feet but there were no other bad results. "I'm glad," said mother, who always looked on the bright side of things, "that your grandfather wasn't here."

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## Is There an Osteosynchrondroitrician in the House?

S. J. PERELMAN

LOOKING BACK at it now, I see that every afternoon at 4:30 for the past five months I had fallen into an exact routine. First off, I'd tap the dottle from my pipe by knocking it against the hob. I never smoke a pipe, but I like to keep one with a little dottle in it, and an inexpensive hob to tap it against; when you're in the writing game, there are these little accessories you need. Then I'd slip off my worn old green smoking jacket, which I loathe, and start down Lexington Avenue for home. Sometimes, finding myself in my shirtsleeves, I would have to return to my atelier for my jacket and overcoat, but as I say, when you're in the writing game, it's strictly head-in-the-clouds. Now, Lexington Avenue is Lexington Avenue—when you've once seen Bloomingdale's and the Wil-Low Cafeteria, you don't go nostalgic all over as you might for the Avenue de l'Observatoire and the Closerie des Lilas.

Anyway, I'd be head down and scudding along under bare poles by the time I reached the block between Fifty-eighth and Fifty-seventh Streets, and my glance into those three shop windows would be purely automatic. First, the highly varnished *Schnecken* in the bakery; then the bones of a human foot shin-

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mying slowly on a near-mahogany pedestal in the shoestore; and finally the clock set in the heel of a congress gaiter at the bootblack's. By now my shabby old reflexes would tell me it was time to buy an evening paper and bury my head in it. A little whim of my wife's; she liked to dig it up, as a puppy does a bone, while I was sipping my cocktail. Later on I taught her to frisk with a ball of yarn, but to get back to what happened Washington's Birthday.

I was hurrying homeward that holiday afternoon pretty much in the groove, humming an aria from "Till Tom Special" and wishing I could play the clarinet like a man named Goodman. Just as it occurred to me that I might drug this individual and torture his secret out of him, I came abreast the window of the shoestore containing the bones of the human foot. My mouth suddenly developed that curious dry feeling when I saw that they were vibrating, as usual, from north to south, every little metatarsal working with the blindest contempt for all I hold dear. I pressed my ear against the window and heard the faint clicking of the motor housed in the box beneath. A little scratch here and there on the shellac surface showed where one of the more enterprising toes had tried to do a solo but had quickly rejoined the band. Not only was the entire arch rolling forward and backward in an oily fashion, but it had evolved an obscene side sway at the same time, a good deal like the *danse à ventre*. Maybe the foot had belonged to an Ouled-Naïl girl, but I felt I didn't care to find out. I was aware immediately of an active desire to rush home and lie down attended by my loved ones. The only trouble was that when I started to leave the place, I could feel my arches acting according to all the proper orthopedic laws, and I swear people turned to look at me as if they heard a clicking sound.

The full deviltry of the thing only became apparent as I lay on my couch a bit later, a vinegar poultice on my forehead, drinking a cup of steaming tea. That little bevy of bones had been oscillating back and forth all through Danzig, Pearl Har-

bor, and the North African campaign; this very minute it was undulating turgidly, heedless of the fact the store had been closed two hours. Furthermore, if its progress were not impeded by the two wires snaffled to the toes (I'll give you *that* thought to thrash around with some sleepless night), it might by now have encircled the world five times, with a stopover at the Eucharistic Congress. For a moment the implications were so shocking that I started up alarmed. But since my loved ones had gone off to the movies and there was nobody to impress, I turned over and slept like a top, with no assistance except three and a half grains of barbital.

I could have reached my workshop the next morning by walking up Third Avenue, taking a cab up Lexington, or even crawling on my hands and knees past the shoestore to avoid that indecent window display, but my feet won their unequal struggle with my brain and carried me straight to the spot. Staring hypnotized at the macabre shuffle (halfway between a rhumba and a soft-shoe step), I realized that I was receiving a sign from above to take the matter in hand. I spent the morning shopping lower Third Avenue, and at noon, dressed as an attaché of the Department of Sanitation, began to lounge nonchalantly before the store. My broom was getting nearer and nearer the window when the manager came out noiselessly. My ducks must have been too snowy, for he gave one of his clerks a signal and a moment later a policeman turned the corner. Fortunately, I had hidden my civvies in the lobby of Proctor's Fifty-eighth Street Theatre, and by the time the breathless policeman rushed in, I had approached the wicket as cool as a cucumber, asked for two cucumbers in the balcony, and signed my name for Bank Nite. I flatter myself that I brought off the affair rather well.

My second attempt, however, was as fruitless as the first. I padded my stomach with a pillow, grayed my hair at the temples, and entered the shop fiercely. Pointing to the white piping on my vest, I represented myself as a portly banker from

Portland, Maine, and asked the manager what he would take for the assets and good will, spot cash. I was about to make him a firm offer when I found myself being escorted out across the sidewalk, the manager's foot serving as fulcrum.

And there, precisely, the matter rests. I have given plenty of thought to the problem, and there is only one solution. Are there three young men in this city, with stout hearts and no dependents, who know what I mean? We can clean out that window with two well-directed grenades and get away over the rooftops. Given half a break, we'll stop that grisly *pas seul* ten seconds after we pull out the pins with our teeth. If we're caught, there's always the cyanide in our belts. First meeting tonight at nine in front of the Railroad Men's Y.M.C.A., and wear a blue cornflower. *Up the rebels!*

## Ring Out, Wild Bells

WOLCOTT GIBBS

WHEN I finally got around to seeing Max Reinhardt's cinema version of "A Midsummer-Night's Dream," and saw a child called Mickey Rooney playing Puck, I remembered suddenly that long ago I had taken the same part.

Our production was given on the open-air stage at the Riverdale Country School, shortly before the war. The scenery was only the natural scenery of that suburban dell, and the cast was exclusively male, ranging in age from eleven to perhaps seventeen. While we had thus preserved the pure, Elizabethan note of the original, it must be admitted that our version had its drawbacks. The costumes were probably the worst things we had to bear, and even Penrod, tragically arrayed as Launcelot in his sister's stockings and his father's drawers, might have been embarrassed for us. Like Penrod, we were costumed by our parents, and like the Schofields, they seemed on the whole a little weak historically. Half of the ladies were inclined to favor the Elizabethan, and they had constructed rather bunchy ruffs and farthingales for their offspring; others, who had read as far as the stage directions and learned that the action took place in an Athenian wood, had produced something vaguely Athenian, usually beginning with a sheet. Only the fairies had a certain uniformity. For some reason their parents had

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all decided on cheesecloth, with here and there a little ill-advised trimming with tinsel.

My own costume was mysterious, but spectacular. As nearly as I have ever been able to figure things out, my mother found her inspiration for it in a Maxfield Parrish picture of a court jester. Beginning at the top, there was a cap with three stuffed horns; then, for the main part, a pair of tights that covered me to my wrists and ankles; and finally slippers with stuffed toes that curled up at the ends. The whole thing was made out of silk in alternate green and red stripes, and (unquestionably my poor mother's most demented stroke) it was covered from head to foot with a thousand tiny bells. Because all our costumes were obviously perishable, we never wore them in rehearsal, and naturally nobody knew that I was invested with these peculiar sound effects until I made my entrance at the beginning of the second act.

Our director was a man who had strong opinions about how Shakespeare should be played, and Puck was one of his favorite characters. It was his theory that Puck, being "the incarnation of mischief," never ought to be still a minute, so I had been coached to bound onto the stage, and once there to dance up and down, cocking my head and waving my arms.

"I want you to be a little whirlwind," this man said.

Even as I prepared to bound onto the stage, I had my own misgivings about those dangerously abundant gestures, and their probable effect on my bells. It was too late, however, to invent another technique for playing Puck, even if there had been room for anything but horror in my mind. I bounded onto the stage.

The effect, in its way, must have been superb. With every leap I rang like a thousand children's sleighs, my melodies foretelling God knows what worlds of merriment to the enchanted spectators. It was even worse when I came to the middle of the stage and went into my gestures. The other ringing had been loud but sporadic. This was persistent, varying only

slightly in volume and pitch with the vehemence of my gestures. To a blind man, it must have sounded as though I had recklessly decided to accompany myself on a xylophone. A maturer actor would probably have made up his mind that an emergency existed, and abandoned his gestures as impracticable under the circumstances. I was thirteen, and incapable of innovations. I had been told by responsible authorities that gestures went with this part, and I continued to make them. I also continued to ring—a silvery music, festive and horrible.

If the bells were hard on my nerves, they were even worse for the rest of the cast, who were totally unprepared for my new interpretation. Puck's first remark is addressed to one of the fairies, and it is mercifully brief.

I said, "How now, spirit! Whither wander you?"

This unhappy child, already embarrassed by a public appearance in cheesecloth and tinsel, was also burdened with an opening speech of sixteen lines in verse. He began bravely:

Over hill, over dale,  
Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Through flood, through fire . . .

At the word "fire," my instructions were to bring my hands up from the ground in a long, wavery sweep, intended to represent fire. The bells pealed. To my startled ears, it sounded more as if they exploded. The fairy stopped in his lines and looked at me sharply. The jingling, however, had diminished; it was no more than as if a faint wind stirred my bells, and he went on:

I do wander every where,  
Swifter than the moone's sphere . . .

Here again I had another cue, for a sort of swoop and dip indicating the swiftness of the moone's sphere. Again the bells rang out, and again the performance stopped in its tracks. The

fairy was clearly troubled by these interruptions. He had, however, a child's strange acceptance of the inscrutable, and was even able to regard my bells as a last-minute adult addition to the program, nerve-racking but not to be questioned. I'm sure it was only this that got him through that first speech.

My turn, when it came, was even worse. By this time the audience had succumbed to a helpless gaiety. Every time my bells rang, laughter swept the spectators, and this mounted and mingled with the bells until everything else was practically inaudible. I began my speech, another long one, and full of incomprehensible references to Titania's changeling.

"Louder!" said somebody in the wings. "You'll have to talk louder."

It was the director, and he seemed to be in a dangerous state.

"And for heaven's sake, stop that jingling!" he said.

I talked louder, and I tried to stop the jingling, but it was no use. By the time I got to the end of my speech, I was shouting and so was the audience. It appeared that I had very little control over the bells, which continued to jingle in spite of my passionate efforts to keep them quiet.

All this had a very bad effect on the fairy, who by this time had many symptoms of a complete nervous collapse. However, he began his next speech:

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are you not he  
That . . .

At this point I forgot that the rules had been changed and I was supposed to leave out the gestures. There was a furious jingling, and the fairy gulped.

"Are you not he that, that . . ."

He looked miserably at the wings, and the director supplied

the next line, but the tumult was too much for him. The unhappy child simply shook his head.

"Say anything!" shouted the director desperately. "Anything at all!"

The fairy only shut his eyes and shuddered.

"All right!" shouted the director. "All right, Puck. *You begin your next speech.*"

By some miracle, I actually did remember my next lines, and had opened my mouth to begin on them when suddenly the fairy spoke. His voice was a high, thin monotone, and there seemed to be madness in it, but it was perfectly clear.

"Fourscore and seven years ago," he began, "our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived . . ."

He said it right through to the end, and it was certainly the most successful speech ever made on that stage, and probably one of the most successful speeches ever made on any stage. I don't remember, if I ever knew, how the rest of us ever picked up the dull, normal thread of the play after that extraordinary performance, but we must have, because I know it went on. I only remember that in the next intermission the director cut off my bells with his penknife, and after that things quieted down and got dull.

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# Gamesmanship

or THE ART OF WINNING GAMES WITHOUT ACTUALLY  
CHEATING

STEPHEN POTTER

## I. WHAT IS IT?

### ORIGINS.

What is gamesmanship? Most difficult of questions to answer briefly. "The Art of Winning Games Without Actually Cheating"—that is my personal "working definition." What is its object? There have been five hundred books written on the subject of games. Five hundred books on play and the tactics of play. Not one on the art of winning.

I well remember the gritty floor and the damp roller-towels of the changing-room where the idea . . . came to me. Yet my approach to the thing had been gradual.

There had been much that had puzzled me—I am speaking now of 1928—in the tension of our games of ping-pong at the Meynells'. Before that there had been the arduous and endurances of friendly lawn tennis at the Farjeons' house near Forest Hill, where Farjeon had wrought such havoc among so many visitors, by his careful construction of a "home court," by the use he made of the net with the unilateral sag, or with a back line at the hawthorn end so nearly, yet not exactly, six inches wider than the back line at the sticky end. There had

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From *The Theory and Practice of Gamesmanship*, by Stephen Potter.  
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been a great deal of hard thinking on both sides during the wavering tide of battle, ending slightly in my favour, of the prolonged series of golf games between E. Lansbury and myself.

8TH JUNE 1931.

But it was in that changing-room after a certain game of lawn tennis in 1931 that the curtain was lifted, and I began to see. In those days I used to play lawn tennis for a small but progressive London College—Birkbeck, where I lectured. It happened that my partner at that time was C. Joad, the celebrated gamesman, who in his own sphere is known as metaphysician and educationist. Our opponents were usually young men from the larger colleges, competing against us not only with the advantage of age but also with a decisive advantage in style. They would throw the service ball very high in the modern manner: the back-hands, instead of being played from the navel, were played, in fact, on the back-hand, weight on right foot, in the exaggerated copy-book style of the time—a method of play which tends to reduce all games, as I believe, to a barrack-square drill by numbers; but, nevertheless, of acknowledged effectiveness.

In one match we found ourselves opposite a couple of particularly tall and athletic young men of this type from University College. We will call them Smith and Brown. The knock-up showed that, so far as play was concerned, Joad and I, playing for Birkbeck, had no chance. U. C. won the toss. It was Smith's service, and he cracked down a cannonball to Joad which moved so fast that Joad, while making some effort to suggest by his attitude that he had thought the ball was going to be a fault, nevertheless was unable to get near with his racket, which he did not even attempt to move. Score: fifteen-love. Service to me. I had had time to gauge the speed of this serve, and the next one did, in fact, graze the edge of my racket-frame. Thirty-love. Now Smith was serving again

to Joad—who this time, as the ball came straight towards him, was able, by grasping the racket firmly with both hands, to receive the ball on the strings, whereupon the ball shot back to the other side and volleyed into the stop-netting near the ground behind Brown's feet.

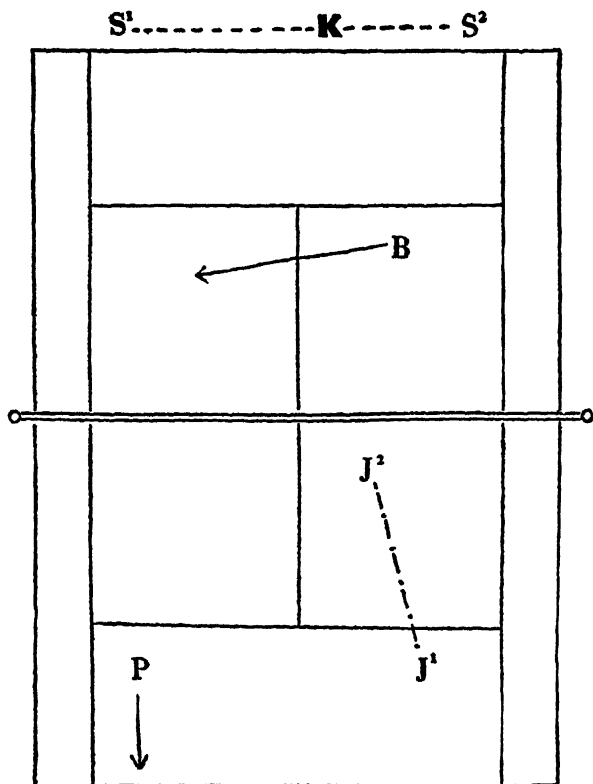


FIG. 1. Key: P = Potter, J = Joad, S = Smith, B = Brown. The dotted line represents Smith's path from S¹ to S². K represents the point he has reached on the crossover when Joad has moved along the line (dot and dash) J¹ (where he had tried to return Smith's service) to J². Smith having arrived at, but not further than, the point K on the line S¹-S², J (Joad) speaks.

Now here comes the moment on which not only this match, but so much of the future of British sport was to turn. Score: forty-love. Smith at S<sub>1</sub> (see Fig. 1) is about to cross over to serve to me (at P). When Smith gets to a point (K) *not less than one foot and not more than two feet* beyond the centre of the court (I know now what I only felt then—that timing is everything in this gambit), Joad (standing at J<sup>2</sup>) called across the net, in an even tone:

“Kindly say clearly, please, whether the ball was in or out.”

Crude to our ears, perhaps. A Stone-Age implement. But beautifully accurate gamesmanship for 1931. For the student must realise that these two young men were both in the highest degree charming, well-mannered young men, perfect in their sportsmanship and behaviour. Smith (at point K) stopped dead.

SMITH: I'm so sorry—I *thought* it was out. (*The ball had hit the back netting twelve feet behind him before touching the ground.*) But what did you think, Brown?

BROWN: I *thought* it was out—but do let's have it again.

JOAD: No, I don't want to have it again. I only want you to say clearly, if you will, whether the ball is in or out.

There is nothing more putting off to young university players than a slight suggestion that their etiquette or sportsmanship is in question. How well we know this fact, yet how often we forget to make use of it. Smith sent a double fault to me, and another double fault to Joad. He did not get in another ace service till halfway through the third set of a match which incidentally we won.

That night I thought hard and long. Could not this simple gambit of Joad's be extended to include other aspects of the game—to include all games? For me, it was the birth of gamesmanship. . . .



## II. THE PRE-GAME

. . . Let us start with a few simple exercises for beginners: and let us begin with the pre-game, for much of the most important gamesmanship play takes place before the game has started. Yet if mistakes are made, there is plenty of time to recover.

The great second axiom of gamesmanship is now worded as follows: THE FIRST MUSCLE STIFFENED (in his opponent by the Gamesman) IS THE FIRST POINT GAINED. Let us consider some of the processes of Defeat by Tension.

The standard method is known as the "flurry."

The "flurry" is for use when changing in the locker-room before a rackets match, perhaps, or leaving home in your opponent's car for, say, a game of lawn tennis. The object is to create a state of anxiety, to build up an atmosphere of muddled fluster.

Supposing, for instance, that your opponent has a small car. He kindly comes along to pick you up before the game. Your procedure should be as follows (1) Be late in answering the bell. (2) Don't have your things ready. Appearing at last, (3) call *in an anxious or "rattled" voice* to wife (who need not, of course, be there at all) some taut last-minute questions about dinner. Walk down path and (4) realise you have forgotten shoes. Return with shoes; then just before getting into car pause (5) *a certain length of time* (see any threepenny edition of Bohn's *Tables*) and wonder (i) whether racket is at the club or (ii) whether you have left it "in the bath-room at top of the house."

Like the first hint of paralysis, a scarcely observable fixing of your opponent's expression should now be visible. Now is the time to redouble the attack. Map-play can be brought to bear. On the journey let it be known that you "think you know

a better way," which should turn out, when followed, to be incorrect and should if possible lead to a blind alley. (See Fig. 2.)

Meanwhile, time is getting on. Opponent's tension should have increased. Psychological tendency, if not temporal necessity, will cause him to drive faster, and—behold! now the gamesman can widen his field and bring in carmanship by suggesting, with the minutest stiffening of the legs at corners, an unconscious tendency to put on the brakes, indicating an unexpressed desire to tell his opponent that he is driving not very well, and cornering rather too fast.

NOTE I.—The "flurry" is best used before still-ball games, especially golf, croquet or snooker. Anxious car-driving may actually improve opponent's execution in fast games, such as rackets or ping-pong.

NOTE II.—Beginners must not rush things. The smooth working of a "flurry" sequence depends on practice. The motions of pausing on the doorstep ("Have I got my gym shoes?"), hesitating on the running-board, etc., are exercises which I give my own students; but I always recommend that they practise the motions for at least six weeks, *positions only*, before trying it out with the car, suitcase and shoes.

#### CLOTHESMANSHIP.

The "flurry" is a simple example. Simpler still, but leading to the most important subdivision of our subject, is the question of clothesmanship, or the "Togman," as he used to be called.

The keen observer of the tennis-court incident described above would have noticed a marked disparity in clothes. The trousers of the young undergraduate players were well creased and clean, with flannel of correct colour, etc., etc. C. Joad, on the other hand, wore a shirt of deep yellow, an orange scarf



FIG. 2. Sketch plan to show specimen Wrong Route from Maida Vale to Dulwich Covered Courts

to hold up his crumpled trousers, and—standing out very strongly, as I remember, in the hot June sunlight—socks of deep black.

Instinctively, Joad had demonstrated in action what was to become the famous "Second Rule" of gamesmanship, now formulated as follows:

IF THE OPPONENT WEARS, OR ATTEMPTS TO WEAR, CLOTHES CORRECT AND SUITABLE FOR THE GAME, BY AS MUCH AS HIS CLOTHES SUCCEED IN HIS FUNCTION, BY SO MUCH SHOULD THE GAMESMAN'S CLOTHES FAIL.

Corollary: Conversely, if the opponent wears the wrong clothes, the gamesman should wear the right.

"If you can't volley, wear velvet socks," we Old Gamesmen used to say. The good-looking young athlete, perfectly dressed, is made to feel a fool if his bad shot is returned by a man who looks as if he has never been on a tennis-court before. His good clothes become a handicap by virtue of their very suitability.

It is true that against the new golf-club member, inclined to be modest and nervous, a professional turn-out can be effective. A well-worn but well-cut golf jacket and a good pair of mackintosh trousers can, in this situation, be of real value. (My own tip here is to take an ordinary left-hand glove, cut the thumb off, make a diamond-shaped hole on the back, and say, "Henry Cotton made this for me—he never plays with any other.")

#### COUNTER-GAMESMANSHIP.

But the average gamesman must beware, at this point, of counter-gamesmanship. He may find himself up against an experienced hand, such as J. K. C. Dalziel, who, when going out to golf, used to keep two changes in the dicky of his car—one correct and the other incorrect. One golf-bag covered in zipps and with five woods, twelve irons and a left-handed cleek;

a second bag containing only three irons and one wood, each with an appearance of string-ends tied round their necks. I always remember Jimmy Dalziel's "bent pin" outfit, as he used to call it. ("The little boy with the bent pin always catches more than the professional angler.") Many is the time I have



FIG. 3. Clothesmanship: wrong clothes in which Miss E. Watson beat Mrs. de Greim in the Finals of the Waterloo Cup Croquet Tourney, 18th August 1902.

scoured London with him to find a pair of odd shoe-laces. His plan was simple. If he found, at the club-house, that his opponent was rather humbly dressed, he would wear the smart outfit. If the conditions were reversed, out would come the frayed pin-stripe trousers, the stringy clubs and the fair-isle sweater.

"And I don't want a caddie," he would say.

Of course, in his correct clothes, he would automatically order a caddie, calling for "Bob," and mumbling something about "Must have Bob. He knows my game. Caddied for me in the Northern Amateur."

### III. THE GAME ITSELF

#### SOME BASIC PLAYS

"How to Win Games Without Being Able to Play Them." Reduced to the simplest terms, that is the formula, and the student must not at first try flights too far away from this basic thought.

To begin with, let him, say, carry on the "flurry" motive. Let him aim at tension. Let him, for instance, invent some "train which he would rather like to catch if the game was over by then," but "doesn't want to hurry."

#### SPORTSMANSHIP PLAY.

Remember the slogan: "THE GOOD GAMESMAN IS THE GOOD SPORTSMAN." The use of sportsmanship is, of course, most important. In general, with the athletic but stupid player, ex-rowing or ex-boxing, perhaps, who is going to take it out of you, by God, if he suspects you of being unsporting, extreme sportiness is the thing, and the instant waiving of any rule which works in your favour is the procedure.

On the other hand, playing against the introvert crusty

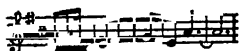
cynical type, remember that sportiness will be wasted on him. There must be no unsportingness on your part, of course; but a keen knowledge of little-known rules and penalties will cause him to feel he is being beaten at his own game. (See under "Croquet, rulesmanship in.")

When questioned about the etiquette of gamesmanship—so important for the young player—I talk about Fidgets. If your adversary is nervy, and put off by the mannerisms of his opponent, it is unsporting, and therefore not gamesmanship, to go in, e.g., for a loud noseblow, say, at billiards, or to chalk your cue squeakingly, when he is either making or considering a shot.

On the other hand, a basic play, in perfect order, can be achieved by, say, whistling fidgetingly *while playing yourself*. And I once converted two down into two up when playing golf against P. Beard, known also as the leader of an orchestra, by constantly whistling a phrase from the Dorabella Variation with one note—always the same note—wrong.<sup>1</sup>

A good general attack can be made by talking to your opponent about his own job, in the character of the kind of man who always tries to know more about your own profession than you know yourself.

<sup>1</sup> It may be worth recalling that Elgar himself, when playing croquet against fellow-musicians, made use of the Horn *motiv* from the *Ring*—



He would whistle this correctly except for the second note, substituting for A some inappropriate variant, often a slightly flattened D sharp, *sliding* up to it, from the opening note of the phrase:—



A voice from the past indeed. Yet have any of our modern experts in the music play really improved on this phrase, devised before Gamesmanship was formulated or even described?

## PLAYING-FOR-FUN PLAY.

The good gamesman, like the good sportsman, never plays for large sums of money. But something can usually be made out of the situation if your opponent expresses a wish to play for the "usual half-crown," or a wish not to do so. It is obviously easy for the gamesman to make his opponent feel awkward by countering his suggestion that they should play for stakes with a frank "Come, let's play for the fun of the game." Alternatively, if your opponent refuses your offer to play for half a crown here is a neat counter:

LAYMAN: Half a crown on it? No, I'm not particularly anxious to play for money. What is the point? If one starts worrying about the pennies . . .

GAMESMAN: Exactly. If money is important to you, much better not.

LAYMAN: But I meant——

GAMESMAN: (*Friendly.*) Of course.

## NICE CHAPMANSHIP.

A bigger subject which may be introduced here revolves round the huge question of nice chapmanship and its uses. (I refuse to use the hideous neologism "nicemanship" which I see much in evidence lately.)

Here is the general principle: that Being a Nice Chap in *certain circumstances* is valuable when playing against extremely young, public school players who are genuinely nice. A train of thought can be started in their minds to the effect that "it would be rather a rotten trick to beat old G. by too much." Thereby that fatal "letting up" is inaugurated which can be the undoing of so many fine players. R. Lodge, at sixty-five, always said that he had never been beaten, in a key match, by any decently brought up boy under twenty-five, and that he could always "feel 'em out by their phizzes."



## AUDIENCE PLAY.

Nice chapmanship is, of course, closely associated with sportsmanship, especially in its relation to the question of playing or not playing to the audience. There is obviously some value in a good hearty "Have it again" early in the game (of darts, for instance), or the lawn tennis ball slammed into the net after the doubtful decision, especially if this is done so that your opponent can see through the ploy<sup>2</sup> but the on-lookers cannot.

But the experienced gamesman knows that if he is playing to a small audience he must make up his mind whether he is going to play *to* the audience, or whether he is going to retire behind an impersonal mask of modesty.

In general, the rule holds—LET YOUR ATTITUDE BE THE ANTI-THESIS OF YOUR OPPONENT'S; and let your manner of emphasising this different attitude put him in the wrong.

For example, if your opponent is a great showman, assume (e.g., at snooker) an air of modest anonymity; be appreciative, even, of his antics; then quietly play your shot, so that the audience begins to say, "I prefer G.'s game. He gets on with it, anyhow."

*Per contra*, when in play against a dour opponent, who studiously avoids all reaction to the audience, implying that "this is a match"—*then*, by all means be the "chap who doesn't care a damn" . . . though "Of course—sh!—old L. is taking this devilish seriously so I must keep a straight face."

(There is some danger of counter-gamesmanship here. The layman, if he is wise, will pursue his poker-faced policy and you may find your assumption of ill-suppressed gaiety wearing thin. I have myself experienced a partial paralysis in this situation.)

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<sup>2</sup> Sub-plays, or individual manoeuvres of a gambit, are usually referred to as "ploys." It is not known why this is

So much for some of the principal general ploys. Now for some common technical phrases.

RUGGERSHIP AND RUGGERSHIP COUNTER-PLAY.

Under the heading of "Rugger-ship" comes all that great interplay of suggestion summarised in the phrase "Of course, this isn't my game," with the implication that "this game is rather an amusing game, but not grand, dangerous and classical like my game. . . ." If "my game" is rugger or polo or tennis (see under "Tennis players, how to press home advantage of, over lawn tennis players"), then very good work can be done with this gambit.

But it has severe weaknesses, and a promising gamesman in his second year may be able to counter with some such simple enquiry as this:

COUNTER-GAMESMAN (*with interest*): When did you last play rugger?

GAMESMAN: Oh! How long since actually playing? I wonder. . . . I was talking to Leggers the other day—

COUNTER-GAMESMAN: Yes, but how long is it since you played yourself? I mean what date, roughly, was it when you last held a ball in your hand?

GAMESMAN (*hard-pressed*): 1913.

COUNTER-GAMESMAN: A bit of a time. But that, I imagine, is one of the grand things about rugger. If you've ever kicked a rugger ball, at a prep school or home club, you feel that you're a rugger player for the rest of your life.

Much exaggerated praise has been churned out in honour of gamesmanship and its part in the building of the British character. Still, if we study the records, they do reveal not a little of courage in the overcoming of apparently hopeless odds. I am thinking, of course, of G. Tearle—not the actor, but the croquet-player. And, indeed, some of the prettiest effects of gamesmanship are to be seen when an expert in, say, croquet, plays golf, it may be, off the same handicap, against

a real expert in, say, rugger—a man who really has played rugger, twice capped for England. The rugger man certainly starts with a tremendous advantage. His name is a legend, his game is glorious. Croquet is considered, by the lay world, to be piddling. The two meet on the common ground of golf; and even golf, to the rugger man, is considered fairly piddling. Yet I have seen Tearle not only break down this view *but reverse it*, so that in the end the Rugger international would sometimes even be heard claiming that he came from croquet people, but that his character “was not suited to the game.”

Tearle by long practice actually made capital out of croquet. And let me add that Tearle’s triumph demonstrates once again that it is in these long-drawn-out reversal tactics that training and the proper diet stand you in such good stead.

#### COUNTERPOINT.

This phrase, now used exclusively in music, originally stood for Number Three of the general Principles of Gamesmanship. “PLAY AGAINST YOUR OPPONENT’S TEMPO.” This is one of the oldest of gambits and is now almost entirely used in the form “My Slow to your Fast.” E.g., at billiards, or snooker, or golf especially, against a player who makes a great deal of “wanting to get on with the game,” the technique is (1) to agree (Jeffreys always adds here “as long as we don’t hurry on the shot”); (2) to hold things up by fifteen to twenty disguised pauses. Peg-top tees for golf were introduced by Samuel in ’33 for this use. The technique is to tee the ball, frame up for the shot, and then at the last moment stop, pretend to push the peg a little further in or pull it a little further out, and then start all over again. At the next hole vary this with Samuel’s “Golden Perfecto” peg tee, made in such a way that the ball, after sitting still in the cup for two to three seconds, rolls off. (Fig. 4.)

Through the green, the usual procedure is to frame up for the shot and then decide on another club at the last moment.

NOTE.—Do not attempt to irritate partner by spending too long looking for your lost ball. This is unsporting. But good gamesmanship which is also very good sportsmanship can be practised if the gamesman makes a great and irritatingly prolonged parade of spending extra time looking for his *opponent's* ball.

At billiards, the custom of arranging to be summoned to the telephone on fake calls, so as to break your opponent's concentration, is out of date now and interesting only as a re-

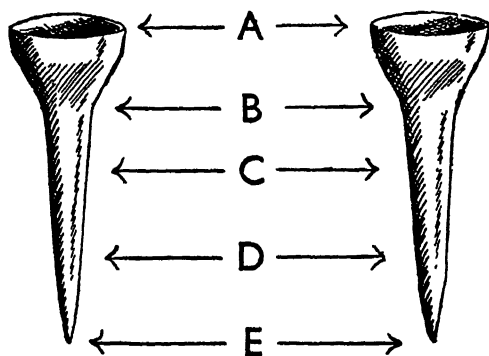


FIG. 4. Samuel's "Championship" (2d.) and "Golden Perfecto" (4/6) golf tees. A = "Cup," B = "Neck," C = "Upper Shaft," D = "Lower Shaft," E = Point or "Plungebill."

minder of the days when "couriers" were paid to gallop up to the old billiard halls for the same purpose. In snooker, the usual practice is to walk quickly up to the table, squat half down on the haunches to look at sight-lines, move to the other end of the table to look at sight-lines of balls which may come in to play later on in the break which you are supposed to be planning. Decide on the shot. Frame up for it, and then at the last moment see some obvious red shot which you had "missed," and which your opponent and everybody else will have no-

ticed before you moved to the table, and which they know is the shot you are going to play in the end anyhow.

"MY TO-MORROW'S MATCH."

In a Key Friendly, or any individual match which you are particularly anxious to win, the best general approach (Rule IV) is the expression of *anxiety to play to-day, because of the match tomorrow*. Construct a story that you are playing A. J. du C. Masterman.<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps the name should be A. C. Swinburne (your opponent will feel he has vaguely heard of this name). Go on to say (if the game is golf)—"Do you mind if I practise using my Number One iron to-day?"—(no need to use it or even have one)—"as I want to know whether to take it to-morrow." Take one practice shot after having picked up your ball, at a lost hole. Seek the advice of opponent. Ask him "What *he* would do if he found himself playing against a *really* long driver, like A. C. Swinburne."

GAME LEG (also known as "Crooked Ankle Play," or "Gamesman's Leg").<sup>4</sup>

"Limpmanship," as it used to be called, or the exact use of minor injury, not only for the purpose of getting out of, but for actually winning difficult contests, is certainly as old as the mediaeval tourneys, the knightly combats, of ancient chivalry. Yet, nowadays, no device is more clumsily used, no gambit more often muffed. "I hope I shall be able to give you a game," says the middle-aged golfer to his young opponent, turning his head from side to side and hunching up his shoulders. "My back was a bit seized up yesterday . . . this wind." How wretchedly weak. "O.K. My youth *versus* your age," says

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<sup>3</sup> "Names impress according to the square of their initials."

<sup>4</sup> Usually shortened now into "Game Leg."

the young counter-gamesman to himself, and rubs this thought in with a variety of subsequent slanting references: "You ought to take it easy for a week or two," etc. No, if use the hackneyed ankle gambit you must, let the injury be the result of a campaign in one of the wars, or a quixotic attempt to stop a runaway horse, at least.

But, here as so often, it is the *reply*, the counter, wherein the ploy of the gamesman can be used to best effect. Indeed, there is nothing prettier than the right use of an opponent's injury. There is the refusal to be put off even if the injury is genuine. There is the adoption of a game which, though apparently ignoring and indeed even favouring your opponent's disability, will yet benefit you in the end. In their own different ways, the "Two F's," Frier and Frith-Morteroi, were the greatest masters of the art of "Countering the Crock." No one who heard them will ever forget their apologies for sending a short one to the man with the twisted ankle, their excuses for the accidental lob in the sun against an opponent with sensitive eyes. But the Frith-Morteroi counter, though not for beginners, has more of grace, and needs more of explanation. Let it be lawn tennis—Frith's game. Frith against "Novice Gamesman," we will call him.

Novice Gamesman is limping slightly. "Hopes he can give F.-M. a game, but his rugger knee has just been prodded back into place by old Coutts of Welbeck Street." Right. F.-M. is full of sympathy. F.-M. sends not a single short one. In fact he does nothing whatever. His supporters become anxious—and then—during, say, the *first* game of the *second* set, while they are changing sides Frith is heard to say (on arriving at point K—see Fig. 5) "Ooo!" sharply.

NOVICE GAMESMAN: What's that?

FRITH-MORTEROI: Nothing. Nothing. I thought——

N. G. (*further away*): What did you say?

F.-M.: Nothing.

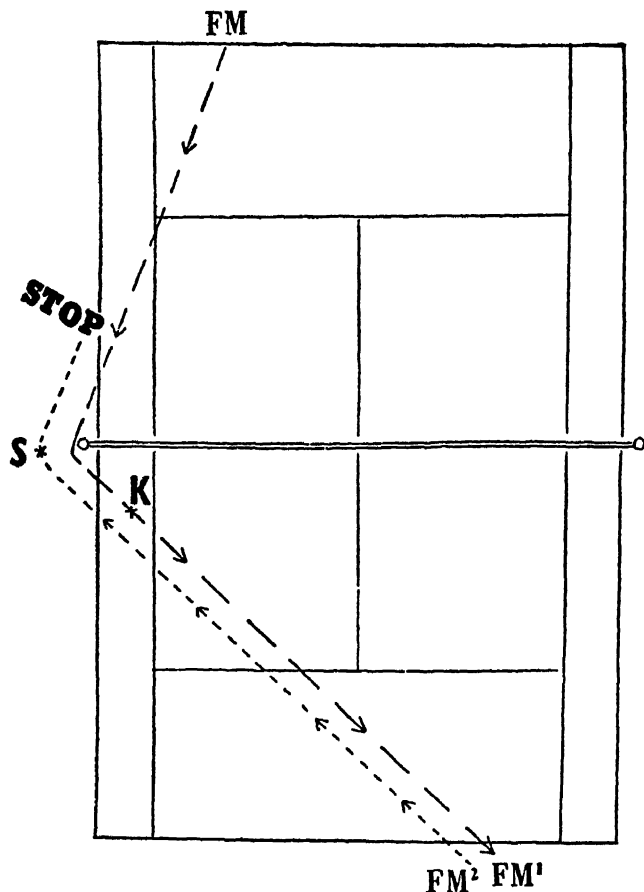


FIG. 5. Diagram of tennis court to show Frith-Mortero's path of changing, and the position S from which he makes his "echo" attack, in Mortero's Counter Game Leg play. Point K on the line FM-FM¹ is the position from which the demi-cry is made (see text). At point S, on the line FM², the full cry is made (see text). "STOP" marks the usual position for the actual verbal interchange or "parlette."

The game continues. But at that next cross over, Frith says "Ow!" (point S, Fig. 5). He pauses a minute, and stands as if lost in thought.

N. G.: What's up?

F.-M.: Nothing. Half a moment.

N. G.: Something wrong?

F.-M. ( *rubs his chest with his knuckles* ): No. No. It's only the old pump.

N. G.: Pump?

F.-M.: Yes. The ancient ticker.

N. G.: What—heart?

F.-M.: I'm supposed not to be using it full out at the moment.  
Only a temporary thing

N. G.: Good Lord.

F.-M.: It's all right now!

N. G.: Good.

F.-M.: Couple of crocks!

N. G.: Well. Shall we get on?

"*Couple of crocks.*" Observe the triple thrust against the Novice Gamesman. (1) Frith establishes the fact that he, also, labours under a handicap) (2) the atmosphere which Novice Gamesman has built up with so much restraint, but so much labour—the suggestion of silent suffering—is the precise climate in which Frith is now going to prosper, and (3)—most important of all—Frith has won the gamesmanship part of the contest already, set and match, by sportingly waiting, say twenty-five minutes, before revealing his own somewhat worse disability. Novice Gamesman having mentioned his rugger knee—a stale type of infliction anyhow—is made to look a fool and a fusser. More, he is made to look unsporting.

I believe it is true to say that once Frith-Morteroy had achieved this position, he was never known to lose a game. He made a special study of it—and I believe much of his spare time was spent reading the medical books on the subject of minor cardiac weaknesses.



## JACK RIVERS OPENING.

After this most successful of basic plays, may I dare to end this chapter with a very simple but favourite gambit of my own?

I call it the Jack Rivers Opening. I have written elsewhere of the sporting-unsporting approach, always to be revered as the parent of modern gamesman play. But if sporting-unsporting is vaguely regarded as a thing of the past, the gamesman knows that it is a habit of thought still rooted in many British players.

Perhaps the most difficult type for the gamesman to beat is the man who indulges in pure play. He gets down to it, he gets on with it, he plays each shot according to its merits, and his own powers, without a trace of exhibitionism, and no by-play whatever. In golf, croquet or ping-pong—golf especially—he is liable to wear you down by playing the “old aunty” type of game.

My only counter to this, which some have praised, is to invent, early in the game or before it has started, an imaginary character called “Jack Rivers.” I speak of his charm, his good looks, his fine war record and his talent for games—and, “by the way, he is a first-class pianist as well.” Then, a little later: “I like Jack Rivers’s game,” I say. “He doesn’t care a damn whether he wins or loses so long as he has a good match.”

Some such rubbish as this, although at first it may not be effective, often wears down the most successfully cautious opponent, *if the method is given time to soak in*. Allow your opponent to achieve a small lead, perhaps, by his stone-walling methods; and the chances are that—even if he has only been hearing about Jack Rivers for thirty minutes—he will begin to think: “Well, perhaps I am being a bit of a stick-in-the-mud.” He feels an irrational desire to play up to what appears to be your ideal of a good fellow. After all, he remembers, hadn’t he been once chaffed for breaking a window with a cricket-ball

when he was on holiday at Whitby? He himself was a bit mad once. Soon he is throwing away point after point by adopting a happy-go-lucky, hit-or-miss method which doesn't suit his game in the least.

Meanwhile *you* begin to play with pawky steadiness, and screen this fact by redoubling your references to Jack Rivers. You talk of the way in which Jack, too, loved to open his shoulders for a mighty smite, landing him in trouble as often as not; but the glorious thing about him was that he didn't care two hoots for that . . . and so long as he had a good smack, and a good game . . . , etc.

So much for the Principal Plays, in gamesmanship. Now for the other gambits which must be brought into play as the game progresses.

#### IV. WINMANSHIP

. . . The assiduous student of gamesmanship has little time for the *minutiae* of the game itself—little opportunity for learning how to play the shots, for instance. His skill in stroke-making may indeed be almost non-existent. So that the gamesman who finds himself winning in the early stages of the match is sometimes at a loss. Therefore, this seems to me the place to set down a few words of help and friendly advice to the winning gamesman, to help him keep his lead; to assist him to maintain his advantage, and rub his opponent's face in the dirt.

#### A NOTE ON CONCENTRATION.

Very often the opponent will show signs, just as he is beginning to lose, of being irritated by distractions. At golf, "somebody has moved." At billiards, "somebody talked." Take this opportunity of making him feel that he is not really a player at all by talking on these lines:

Somebody yelling, did you say? Do you know, I didn't notice it. I'm a fool at games. Don't seem to be able to be aware of anything outside them, when I'm playing the shot. I remember, once, Joyce Wethered was putting. 18th green—semi-final. An express train went by within fifteen feet of her nose.

"How did you manage to sink that putt—with that train . . . ?"

"What train?" she said.

Always tell the same story to the same man, for your example. (See under "Story, constant repetition of, to the same person.")

#### WHEN TO GIVE ADVICE.

In my own view (but compare Motherwell) there is only one correct time when the gamesman can give advice: and that is when the gamesman has achieved a *useful* though not necessarily a *winning* lead. Say three up and nine to play at golf, or, in billiards, sixty-five to his opponent's thirty. Most of the accepted methods are effective. E.g., in billiards, the old phrase serves. It runs like this:

GAMESMAN: Look . . . may I say something?

LAYMAN: What?

GAMESMAN: *Take it easy.*

LAYMAN: What do you mean?

GAMESMAN: I mean—you know how to make the strokes, but you're stretching yourself on the rack all the time. Look. Walk up to the ball. Look at the line. And make your stroke. Comfortable. Easy. It's as simple as that.

In other words, the advice *must be vague*, to make certain it is not helpful. But, in general, if properly managed, the mere giving of advice is sufficient to place the gamesman in a practically invincible position.

NOTE.—According to some authorities the advice should be quite genuine and perfectly practical.

## WHEN TO BE LUCKY.

The uses of the last of the three basic plays for winmanship are, I think, no less obvious, though I believe this gambit is less used than the other, no doubt because a certain real skill in play is involved, making it a little out of place in the gamesman world. I have worded the rule as follows. LET THE GAMESMAN'S ADVANTAGE OVER AN OPPONENT APPEAR TO BE THE RESULT OF LUCK, NEVER OF PLAY. Always sporting, the good gamesman will say:

I'm afraid I was a bit lucky there . . . the balls are running my way. It's extraordinary, isn't it, how once they start running one way, they go on running one way, all through an entire game. I know it's impossible according to the law of averages . . .

and so on, till your opponent is forced to break in with a reply. Unless he sees through the gambit and counter-games, he is likely to feel an ebbing of confidence if he can be made to believe that it is not your play (which he knows is liable to collapse) but Fate, which is against him.

Yet in spite of the ease with which most games-players can be persuaded that they are unlucky, I know the difficulties of this gambit: and as I have had many complaining letters from all parts of the country from gamesmen saying: "They can't do it," "What's the point?," "No good," etc., I will end this with a few notes:

NOTE I.—The best shot to practise with cue and ivories is undoubtedly the Imitation Fluke. E.g., in billiards, play for an in-off the red top left of a kind which will give colour to your apology that you meant to pot the red top right. A. Boulton (the snooker player, not the conductor) demonstrates a shot, suitable for volunteer only, in which he pots the black while apparently framing up to hit a ball of inferior scoring value (e.g., the blue). (See Fig. 6.)

A good tip, says Boulton, is to chalk the end of the cue ostentatiously, while apologising after making the shot.

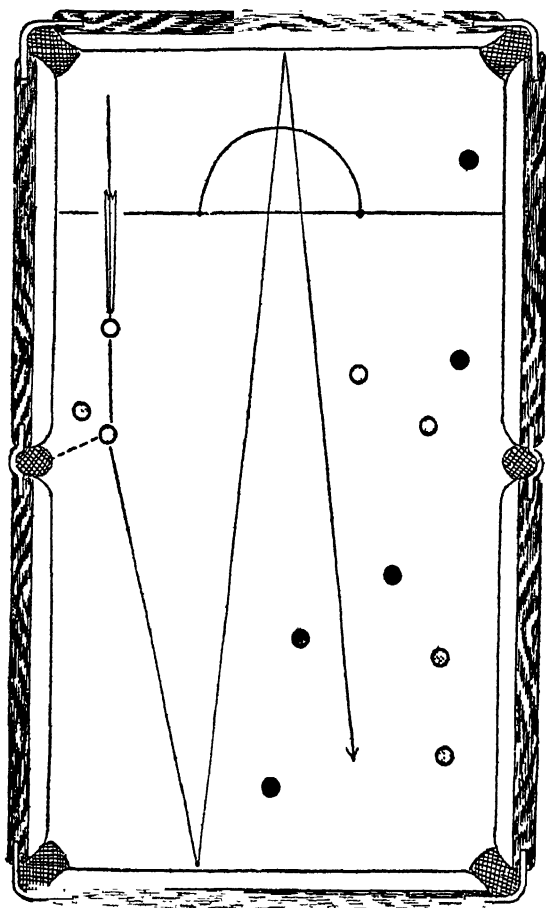


FIG. 6. Diagram of billiards table to show Disguised Fluke play. Key: Black balls = red balls; shaded balls = coloured balls; white ball = white ball; end of cue = end of cue. Player has framed up as if to hit blue (on extreme right) but actually pots black (ball on extreme right but one). Straight line = path of white ball after impact (leaving an easy red) Dotted line = path of black into middle pocket.

NOTE II.—In my pamphlet for the British Council I listed eighteen ways of saying "Bad luck." I do not believe there are more.

NOTE III (For advanced students only).—Different from fluke play, though sometimes confused with it, is the demonstration of another kind of advantage over an opponent in which the gamesman tries to prove that he is favoured not by good luck but by *a fortunate choice of instruments*. To get away from text-book formulae, let me explain this by example.

In golf, for instance. You find yourself two up at the fifth hole. You wish to make certain of your advantage.

Supposing, for whatever reason, you hit your drive; and supposing you hit it five or preferably ten yards farther than your oppo-

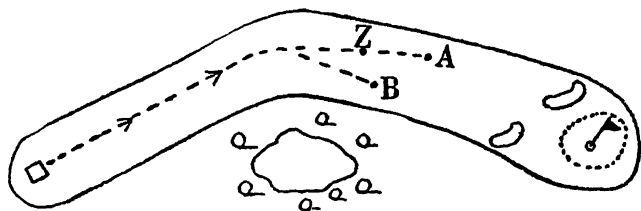


FIG. 7. Diagram of golf hole. A = point reached by Gamesman's drive. B = opponent's drive Z = point on arrival at which Gamesman commences Gamesplay or "Parlette."

nent. Procedure: walk off the tee *with* opponent, in the normal method of the two-up walk-off, conversing, and listening rather charmingly to what he says, etc. (See Number Twelve in my *Twenty-five Methods of Tee-leaving*: Scribners, August 1935.) As you approach the balls on the fairway, but before parting company (see Fig. 7) say, "Much of a muchness." Opponent will then say over his shoulder:

"You're ten yards farther at least."

"So I am," you say.

Nearing the green you start thinking aloud in his presence.

"Funny. I thought those drives were level. It's that ball of mine."

"What are you using? Ordinary two-dot, isn't it?"

"Oh, no—no—that's how it's been repainted. Underneath it's a Madfly."

"Madfly?"

"Madfly. Pre-war only. It goes like sin. Really does put ten yards on to your shot. I'll see if I can get you one. Honestly, I hardly feel it's fair of me to play with it."

With proper management the gamesman can wreak far more havoc by suggesting that he has the advantage of a better ball, than by demonstrating that he has a better swing.

Tennis rackets strung with a special gut giving out a particularly high "ping," suggesting a tigerish resilience, are made by dealers who cater for this sort of thing. G. Odoreida, on his first appearance at St. Ives, brought with him a racket in which a stretch of piano wire, tuned to high G, was substituted for one of the ordinary strings. When "testing his racket" before play, he plucked the piano wire, adding smilingly: "I like something you can hit with."

A propos of this, an amusing correspondence followed with "Wagger"—W.A.G.A., the West Australian Gamesmen's Association—which august body considered this action ungamesmanlike.

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## *Section Four*

QUESTIONS

APPENDIX

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# Questions

WHEN CONAN DOYLE WAS  
SHERLOCK HOLMES  
(p. 11)

1. The purpose of "Learning to Ski: Straight Running" is comparatively simple and has only one significant aspect: to explain to the reader how to ski straight down a hill. The purpose of "When Conan Doyle Was Sherlock Holmes" is more complex and has several significant aspects. One of these is to provide the reader with facts about "The Case of George Edalji." What are some of the others? From what do you infer them? Of what importance to the purpose is the final sentence? Why do you suppose it was saved until the very end?
2. What general attitude toward the facts of the Edalji affair is expressed by the tone of the essay? Are the facts such that other attitudes might be felt by persons acquainted with them? If so, does any one of these attitudes seem to you to be more appropriate to the facts than the general one of the essay? Explain your answer.
3. What is accomplished by dividing the essay into sections? State the topic of each section and its relation to the general purpose of the essay. Consider the order of these topics and explain how they contribute to the suspense of the essay. What other orders are possible? How well would they serve the purpose of the essay?
4. What is the level of usage? Upon what details of language do you base your answer? What is the effect of this level of usage? Is it appropriate to the purpose? Why?

5. Account for the use of quotations in the essay. Is it likely that the author had actual records for his direct quotation of "muttered comment" on page 13 (" 'E's funny. . . . Don't smoke or drink. 'Ardly seems to notice you, even, when 'e looks straight at you. And what about the last time?")? If not, what justification is there for the quotation? Does it merely give information about Edalji's manner and habits?
6. What connotative words and phrases do you find most striking in the four opening paragraphs? Are their effects consistent? What is their total effect? Are any of them images? If so, identify them. Do they make strong sensory impressions?
7. Is the characterization of Conan Doyle direct or indirect? Does the method of characterization serve the purpose of the essay well? Explain your answer.
8. Suppose that the purpose of the essay were to study racial prejudice in a small English mining town. What details here presented would be included? What details would be omitted? Apply these questions in turn to the supposed purposes of (a) criticizing bureaucracy, (b) presenting a psychological study of George Edalji, and (c) arguing the need for courts of appeal. In each case, explain your answers.

## NEW ENGLAND XANADU: NORUMBEGA

(p. 32)

The purpose of this essay is to present historical data and to explain their relationships and their historical meaning. For the most part, the essay does not go beyond the facts and explanations to interpret their significance in terms of social, moral, aesthetic, or special personal values. Because the facts which it presents have been largely compiled from books and periodicals, it is a typical (and excellent) example of the so-called library research paper. College students who are required to prepare such papers should study the essay closely as a model for their own work. They should pay particular attention to the handling of direct quotations and footnotes.

The following questions are intended to bring out aspects of the essay of special interest to the student writer.

1. State the main topic and purpose of each of the divisions. Is there any advantage in thus separating these topics? If so, what?
2. Are there any interpretations and evaluations of the facts and explanations present in the essay? If so, what are they? Where and how are they expressed? Do they interfere with the presentation of the facts?
3. What is the tone of the essay? How is it communicated? Is it appropriate to the purpose and the general subject of the essay? Explain your answer.
4. What point of view is employed in the essay? Why?
5. What order of ideas has been used in the second section? Does it succeed in holding together the many different details? If so, how? What other orders might be used? In view of the purpose, would they be likely to be as effective? Explain your answer.
6. Comment on the language of the essay. Is it characterized by general or specific, abstract or concrete words?
7. In some instances materials taken from a book or periodical are presented in a summary or an indirect quotation of the original statement. In other instances the materials are presented in direct quotations. What effects do the direct quotations have which the indirect quotations and summaries do not have? Is the choice between direct and indirect quotations a matter of whim, or is some apparent principle involved?
8. Suppose you were going to write an essay on Norumbega mainly intended to entertain the reader. What would be the principal differences between your essay and this one? Account for the differences in terms of the purposes of the essays.

# THE ART OF JUDGING MUSIC

(p. 73)

1. The general purpose of this essay is the same as that of "Flying Blind": to explain a technical subject in nontechnical terms to the interested layman. Yet the tones of the essays are markedly different. How do the *particular* purposes of the essays account

- for the difference? Is the tone of this essay appropriate to its subject and purpose? Why?
2. What evidence do you find that the intended audience of the essay is the interested layman? Cite at least five examples of this evidence.
  3. From what point of view is most of the essay written? Are there any shifts in the point of view? If so, what purpose do these shifts serve? Are you more or less aware of the narrator in this essay than you were of the narrator in "Flying Blind"? Does your awareness have any effect upon your acceptance of the facts and explanations offered? Explain your answer.
  4. Consider the order of ideas in the essay. Where is the main point made? Is this order effective? Why?
  5. What logical method or methods have been used in the second and third paragraphs? Do the conclusions seem valid? On what is their validity based?
  6. In the paragraph on page 76 beginning, "At this point there is material for reflected judgment . . .," are some general statements and concrete illustrations. Find as many of both as you can and explain their relationships. Are the illustrations effective? Could they be made more effective? How?
  7. What is the meaning of *executant*, *cerebrations*, *ruminate*, *gustation*, *patina*, *germane*, *meretricious*, and *spastic*? What is the general effect of these words on the level of usage in the essay? On the tone?
  8. Select some technical process or scientific experiment with which you are familiar and make a list of the details you would omit from an account of it written for laymen. Make another list of details, not actually part of the process or experiment, which you would include. In each case justify your selections in terms of purpose and tone.
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THE PRINCIPLES OF NEWSPEAK  
(p. 81)

Irony is a mode of expression, usually critical and sometimes humorous, which calls attention to contrasts between appearances and reality or between what the person using irony thinks ought to be and what actually is. Favorite subjects for irony are the differences between the ideals we profess and the principles we live by, between a reasonable, efficient, or humane way of doing things and the way we actually do them, and between what we desire and what we actually obtain.

Irony takes many forms which may be roughly divided into irony of statement and irony of situation. In the irony of statement the intended meaning is different from, and frequently contrary to, the apparent meaning. The intended meaning is indicated by the tone of the context or by the presence of a considerable number of details which contradict the apparent meaning and suggest the intended meaning. For example, in the General Prologue to his *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer describes several of the pilgrims as thoroughgoing scamps yet pretends to approve of them. The details make clear the intended meaning. Why, then, has Chaucer bothered to pretend to a different meaning? Why do writers so often employ such other methods of irony as exaggeration or understatement? Because the difference between an apparent and an intended meaning startles us and sharpens our awareness of the particular differences in life with which the writing is concerned. For all its indirection, irony of statement is unusually emphatic.

In the irony of situation we are presented with an obvious—and frequently startling—contrast between what seems appropriate, just, logical, or otherwise suitable under the circumstances and what is actually the case. Examples of irony of situation confront us every day in the stories of faithful, hard-working, but inarticulate people who are unrewarded and neglected while faithless, self-seeking, glib people are rewarded and acclaimed; in the accounts of grandiose schemes and endeavors that peter out amid bickering, buck-passing, and mounting bills; or in the spectacle of weak or vicious men

loudly declaiming against the very weaknesses or vices that rule them.

George Orwell has been called one of the most brilliant ironists of our times. This essay is a good example of his work. To appraise it, we should, among other things, answer the following questions:

1. What is the actual purpose of this essay?
2. Does the explanation of irony given above apply to the essay as a whole or simply to some of its parts? Explain your answer.
3. The essay is presented in the manner of a semitechnical explanation of facts, neutral in tone and without reference to feelings or values. What is the effect of this manner? Is the manner ironical? If so, what is the actual tone? Are feelings and value judgments actually excluded?
4. Divide the essay into its main sections (in addition to those already indicated) and state the main idea and purpose of each. What, in particular, are the contributions to the essay's meaning of the sections on the different vocabularies? Why should the section on the B vocabulary be the longest? that on the C vocabulary the shortest?
5. Comment on the choice of examples, as, for instance, in the paragraph on page 87 beginning "As we have already seen in the case of the word *free*. . . ." Are they used simply for purposes of illustration? Is the choice of the passage from the Declaration of Independence a good one? Why?
6. What is the character of the supposed writer? What kind of society does he apparently belong to? How are his character and the nature of the society revealed? Are they important to the meaning of the essay? Why?
7. What particular examples of irony are found in the paragraphs beginning "In Newspeak, euphony outweighed every consideration . . . , (page 90) and "So did the fact of having very few words to choose from" (page 91)? Are these examples appropriate to the purpose of the essay? Are they effective?
8. What is the value of this essay for you? Explain your answer.

GUY FAWKES

(p. 95)

1. Why was it necessary in preparing an account of this particular subject for a reference book such as *The Dictionary of National Biography* to confine the essay to a strict itemization of facts?
2. Comment on the language of the essay. Is it characterized by general, rather abstract terms or by specific, concrete ones? What is the usage level? What is its effect upon the tone?
3. Has Lee in any way exploited the intrinsic excitement of his material? On what do you base your answer?
4. Divide the essay into what seem to you its main sections and identify the source of interest and the purpose of each section. Comment on the proportions of the sections and the appropriateness of the proportions to the general subject and purpose of the essay.
5. What is the effect of the mention of the "best whistle" and the "angel of gold" (a small coin bearing the figure of the archangel Michael) bequeathed to Fawkes by his grandmother and the "gold rynge," "bedd," "payre of sheets," and "th' appurtenances" bequeathed by his father? Are the details intended simply to furnish information? Explain your answer.
6. Much of the conversation is paraphrased or otherwise indirectly presented. Why are some parts of it quoted directly, as in the paragraph on page 100 beginning "At one o'clock in the morning the council met in the king's bedchamber . . .?"
7. The essay makes clear that Fawkes was guilty of treason and of undertaking a shocking crime. After reading the essay, do you feel any sympathy for him? How do you feel about the failure of the plot? Account for your answers in terms of specific details of the essay.
8. If you were writing a short story based on the events of the day when Fawkes was discovered in the cellar and arrested, what kind



of details, omitted here, would you add to your account? How has Lee, despite his extreme restraint, suggested some of them?

THE ROMANTICISM OF THE PIONEER

(p. 133)

1. How do the interpretation and evaluation of the experience of pioneering presented in this essay differ from those in Turner's "Contributions of the West to American Democracy"? Find two or three paragraphs which well exemplify the difference.
2. Are the standards of judgment in this essay general or very special? Are its interpretations of human experience significant? Are they limited solely to the experience of the pioneers?
3. What fields of learning, untouched by Turner, does Mumford draw upon for his interpretation and evaluation?
4. If you were to draw up an outline for an essay which was to include only statements and assumptions that Mumford and Turner agree on, what would be the main points of your outline?
5. What differences do you note between the two essays in the use of logic, in the use of images, in the order of ideas, and in the use of allusions? Which essay is the more vivid? Cite specific sentences and paragraphs to support your answer.
6. Can the main idea of this essay be expressed in one sentence? If so, why have so many details been presented?
7. What attitude toward the beginning of "The Return to Nature" is expressed in the third paragraph of the essay? By what means is it expressed? Cite specific details.
8. At one point Mumford refers to ". . . the comment of a young English settler named Fordham, who had come face to face with the untrammelled Children of Nature; this passage occurs on the page after that in which he records the amiable slaughter of six Indian men and women, on English Prairie, in the spring of 1817." What is the effect of "untrammelled Children of Nature" in this context? Why might one choose the unusual word "un-

trammeled" when more familiar synonyms are available? What is the effect of the use of capital letters? What is the effect of calling the slaughter of the Indians "amiable"?

A PEOPLE ON WHEELS

(p. 155)

1. The purpose of "Flying Blind" was to explain a technological process to the interested layman. It did not include interpretation and evaluation of the process except as these helped to make the explanation clearer. The purpose of "A People on Wheels" is to interpret the effect of aspects of science and technology upon American thought and society. In a broad sense, therefore, it may be said to begin where the purpose of "Flying Blind" leaves off. Find at least five characteristic passages in this essay which include statements and assumptions of the kind omitted or clearly subordinated in "Flying Blind."
2. Examine the paragraph on page 171 beginning "Nor did the motorist need to leave the great bazaar. . . ." How do the details of this paragraph illustrate one of the less important aspects of the purpose of this essay?
3. What logical method predominates in this essay? Does this method seem appropriate to the purpose? Is it a conspicuous element in the organization of the essay? Explain your answers.
4. Do the illustrations of section two, "Brightening Up the Mores," serve a special purpose, or are they intended principally to catch the reader's attention?
5. In section five, "Lizzie's Double Life," a great many diverse details are presented. By what means are these details held together?
6. The level of usage in this essay varies between the formal and informal, at times (as in the reference to "Joe Doakes") dropping into the vulgate. What differences of effect, if any, do you notice between the levels? Are the differences appropriate to the apparent purpose or simply accidental? Cite examples of con-

trasting levels and effects and defend your answer in terms of them.

7. What is the tone of the paragraph on page 170 beginning "Nevertheless, tourism steadily increased . . ." ? Is this tone appropriate to the purpose of the essay? Is it the tone of the entire essay? Is it a sign that we are not to take the ideas of the essay seriously?
8. Suppose that you were going to write an essay on the influence of movies on American thought and society. Make a list of the general aspects of the subject you would treat. Make a similar list for an essay on the influence of television. Study these lists and then prepare a third list of the special problems that confront writers of essays on such subjects. Finally, consider how well Morris has solved the problems in writing this essay.

#### AMERICA'S RESPONSIBILITIES (p. 182)

1. What, according to Mr. Parkes, is "the peculiar and inescapable responsibility of the Americans"? Why does he believe that "the pragmatic approach" is not enough to meet it?
2. What is the chief resource of the Americans in facing this responsibility? What is their chief weakness? In what ways does "A People on Wheels" illustrate this weakness?
3. Which view of earlier American history seems closer to the interpretation of the causes of our present difficulties which is outlined in this essay, that presented in "Contributions of the West to American Democracy" or that presented in "The Romanticism of the Pioneer"? Explain your answer.
4. What assumptions about totalitarianism form the basis of some of the reasoning in this essay (as, for example, in the conclusion of the paragraph on page 189 beginning "The foundation of an American order can only be . . .")? Is Parkes logical in making these assumptions?
5. Examine the paragraphs on pages 186 and 187 beginning, "In the last resort, as all early spokesmen of American democracy

recognized . . . ,” “But while the history of America confirms, on the whole, this trust in human nature . . . ,” and “Every high civilization is imbued. . . .” What orders of ideas are used in them? Are the main points made at the beginnings or the ends of the paragraphs? What use is made of general statements and explanatory details? How specific and concrete are these details? Are they sufficiently so for the purpose of the essay? Are the paragraphs effective?

6. Comment on the use of allusions in the essay. What general source is most frequently drawn upon? Do the allusions add to the persuasiveness of the essay? What do they add to its tone?
7. Keeping in mind the purpose, tone, point of view, level of usage, and other aspects of the essay, can you justify the use of such phrases as “the democratic idea,” “spiritual intuitions,” “emotional insecurity,” and “the dignity of the individual personality”?
8. If you find this essay convincing, or unconvincing, state what elements in the essay make it so.

FENIMORE COOPER'S LITERARY OFFENSES  
(p. 208)

1. What is the purpose of this essay? Is the essay merely amusing the reader at Cooper's expense, or has it some other objective? Explain your answer.
2. The tone of the essay is extremely informal. Does the informality mean that we are not to take the ideas seriously? Is the criticism weakened by the breezy familiarity of some passages (as in “I wish I may never know peace again. . . . Isn't it a daisy? . . . Bless your heart, Cooper hasn't any more invention than a horse”)? Is the tone of the essay as a whole appropriate to the purpose?
3. Comment on Twain's use of exaggeration as a source of humor. What is the effect, after Twain's exaggerated account of the “miraculous” shooting-match (in itself an exaggerated episode), of the quiet, almost colorless language and ideas appearing at

the conclusion of the climactic paragraph on page 216, which begins, "The miracle is at last complete"?

4. Twain uses many concrete examples of aspects of Cooper's work and quotes extensively for a critical essay of this length. Consider the purpose, the tone, the level of usage, and the use of exaggeration in the essay, and then comment on the function and effectiveness of the examples and quotations.
5. Find six or seven figures of speech (such as "In his little box of stage properties he kept six or eight cunning devices, tricks, artifices for his savages and woodsmen to deceive and circumvent each other with, and he was never so happy as when he was working these innocent things and seeing them go") which help to express the essay's attitude toward Cooper's work and its estimate of the work's value. Which is more persuasive, the direct statements of evaluation or these figures of speech? Why?
6. Are the rules "governing literary art in the domain of romantic fiction" which the essay lists adequate for the criticism of modern novels? Do they fail to cover any important aspects of fiction? Could rules 10 and 11 be applied to the work of writers such as Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, or Robert Penn Warren?
7. Why, if Cooper is as poor a novelist as this essay makes out, is his work taken as seriously as it is in the essay "The Romanticism of the Pioneer"? Has Twain overlooked something of importance? Is his conclusion the only one to be drawn from the evidence he presents?
8. Is this essay more or less fair to its subject than the essay "Brown-ing"? On what do you base your answer?

#### WHAT DOES POETRY COMMUNICATE

(p. 220)

1. Summarize in one or two sentences the reasons Brooks gives for the apparent difficulty of much modern poetry.

2. What aspects of the poem does Brooks ignore? How, in the paragraph on page 228 beginning "But most proponents of poetry as communication have been less discerning . . .," does he justify his ignoring them? Does his theory of the poet as *maker* logically require him to ignore them?
3. Brooks refers to F. L. Lucas as a critic who damns modern poets. What characteristics of Lucas's essay on Browning seem to support Brooks's comment? Which critic do you think would be the more trustworthy in evaluating the work of some older poet such as Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, or Wordsworth? On what do you base your answer?
4. What point of view is employed in this essay? How does it affect the tone? Why has this point of view been used in an essay which appears to treat its topic in a detached, objective manner?
5. Find five or six phrases throughout the essay that help to give it the tone of an informal, rather relaxed conversation. What qualities of these phrases enable them to have this effect? Does the effect mean that we are not to take the ideas seriously? For what apparent reason has this effect been sought?
6. In the opening paragraphs of the essay, reference is made to "the reader of conventional reading habits," "the popular pleas," "the good old days," and "the textbook answer." What are the connotations of these phrases in this context? What is the total effect of these connotations? Does this effect serve the essay's apparent purpose?
7. On page 223 Brooks writes, "I cannot see how we can avoid admitting that all this is communicated by the poem. Here it is in the poem." Do you agree that "all this" is "in the poem"? Explain your answer.
8. Who are the following and what are the significances of the allusions to them? Catullus, Sir James Frazer, Max Eastman, Eliot, Auden, and Tate?

ADDRESS AT COOPER INSTITUTE,  
NEW YORK  
(p. 247)

1. The first editors of this address, Charles C. Nott and Cephas Brainerd, wrote of it, "From the first line to the last—from his premises to his conclusion, he travels with swift, unerring directness which no logician ever excelled—an argument complete and full, without the affectation of learning, and without the stiffness which usually accompanies dates and details." Do you think this is a fair and accurate description of the essay? Explain and justify your answer.
2. What is the nature of Douglas's citing of "our fathers"? By what logical method or methods does Lincoln attempt to cope with this appeal? Are his efforts effective? Why?
3. Describe the tone of the opening of the essay. Is the tone maintained throughout the essay? If not, what other tones appear? Where do they appear? Is there any justification for shifting to them?
4. Divide the essay into its main sections and state the topic and purpose of each. Is the order of ideas in the essay as a whole an effective one? What other orders are possible? Would they be as effective? Explain your answer.
5. Does Lincoln consider the possible validity of part or all of his opponents' views? Does he allow for exceptions to his own general statements? If your answer to these questions is "Yes," do you believe that he logically and successfully accounts for or disposes of these elements which seem to oppose his conclusions?
6. Analyze the reasoning in the paragraph on page 258 beginning "You say we are sectional." Find every fault with it that you can. Is the argument skillful? Sufficiently logical? Convincing?
7. Is the comparison of the Southerners to a highwayman on page 266 fair? Is it effective?
8. Comment on Lincoln's use of the short paragraph and sentence.

## THE HERO AND DEMOCRACY

(p. 270)

1. What logical method predominates in the essay? Is its predominance consistent with the particular purpose of the essay? Explain your answer.
  2. As is pointed out in the opening section of the essay, the reflections which it contains are normative: they involve judgments of value concerning democracy and democracy's good. What are some of the basic assumptions about social and political good and evil lying behind these judgments?
  3. Name five "event-making" men of the past who would endanger a democratic society. Name five figures of the present who are "true" heroes of democracy according to the essay's definition.
  4. In the course of the argument does the essay recognize the existence of real or apparent "negative instances" and contradictions?
  5. What means are used in addition to the methods of logic to give force and persuasiveness to the essay? Cite specific examples in making your answer.
  6. Is there any advantage in dividing the essay into its present parts? Explain your answer.
  7. Analyze the reasoning in the paragraph on page 280 beginning "If we define a democracy as one in which the government rests upon the freely given consent of the governed. . . ." Find every fault with it that you can. Is the argument logical? Convincing?
  8. Of what use are the ideas in this essay in the solution of the problems confronting America defined in Parkes's "America's Responsibilities"?
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## A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN

(p. 291)

1. What is the purpose of this essay? At what point in the essay is it most explicitly stated? Is there any advantage in stating it at this particular point? Explain your answer.
2. John Brown was clearly what "The Hero in Democracy" calls an "event-making" man. That essay presented a view of men like him based on conceptions of social, political, and moral values widely held in our time. With which of these concepts would Thoreau apparently agree? With which of them would he apparently disagree? What conceptions of values would he offer in place of those with which he disagreed?
3. Contrast the interpretations of Brown's character, motives, and significance expressed by Thoreau and Lincoln (in "Address at Cooper Institute"). To what extent is Lincoln in this address a spokesman for the Republicans whom Thoreau abhors? For what qualities does Thoreau apparently abhor them? Are any of these qualities characteristic of Lincoln insofar as you can judge from the ideas and attitudes expressed in his address?
4. Make a list of the topics of the main divisions of the essay. Then make a rough graph of the intensity of expression in the various divisions. Keeping in mind the purpose of the essay, comment upon the appropriateness and effectiveness of the order of the topics and the changes (if you find any) in the intensity of expression.
5. Find at least six images that have a powerful effect upon the tone of the essay and comment upon their qualities and their appropriateness.
6. Does Thoreau at any point overstate his case? If so, are his overstatements exaggerations of the facts, comparisons which are far-fetched, or both? Explain your answer by citing specific passages.
7. What does the essay gain from the quotation of the exact words of John Brown?

8. Consult the biographies of John Brown in *The Dictionary of American Biography* and at least two general encyclopedias. Compare the facts given in these sources with those presented in the essay. What evidence do the sources provide that the details presented in the essay were selected in light of the essay's particular purpose? Comment on the significance, if any, of this evidence.

BEETHOVEN

(p. 316)

1. What is the tone of this essay? By what general means is it expressed? Is it appropriate to the purpose? In answering, cite specific details from the essay.
2. Is this fair musical criticism? Is it meant to be? Is fairness important here?
3. Does the description of the music tell you much about the music itself? Is it important that it should? Do the phrases used make you want to listen to Beethoven's music? Will you listen more carefully than you would if you had not read the essay?
4. What is the "narrator" like? From what aspects of the essay do you infer his character? How do you react to it? Does your reaction noticeably affect your response to the ideas of the essay?
5. How much specific, objective evidence does the essay offer in support of the statement in the first paragraph that the first movement of Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony* is "the noblest piece of absolute music ever written in the sonata form, and it is the noblest piece of program music"? Is it part of the purpose to furnish such evidence?
6. Comment on the references to "a couple of Korngolds thrown in to flavor the pot," "poor old Papa," "Mendelssohn, Weber, Chopin and company performing on their pretty pipes." What is the purpose of these references?
7. What is the effect of Mencken's scrambling of levels of usage?

8. Granted that we should not make a final judgment of a man's powers from a single work, what tentative judgment of Mencken as a critic do you make after reading this essay? Are there any kinds of art (or, more particularly, kinds of music) which he might not be equipped to criticize? Explain your answer.

## ARISTOCRACY

(p. 322)

1. What is the purpose of this essay? Do you believe that it is realized? What is the chief value of this essay for you? Explain your answer by referring to specific passages, their effects, and their appropriateness to the purpose.
2. What assumptions about the nature and value of democracy are made in "The Hero and Democracy" and flatly rejected in this essay? How do you think Lawrence would judge Hook's "heroes of democracy"? How do you think Hook would judge many of Lawrence's "aristocrats"?
3. Explaining his comment that "When man becomes stale and paltry, his sun is the mere stuff that our sun is," a "puny 'envelope of incandescent gas,'" Lawrence says, "The world is to us what we take from it. The sun is to us what we take from it. And if we are puny, it is because we take punily from the superb sun." How is this meant as a criticism of contemporary life? Does the criticism seem significant to you? What are some of the things the sun apparently stands for in Lawrence's thinking?
4. When Lawrence writes that a daisy is "more alive" than a fern, that a bee is "more alive" than a daisy, that a nightingale "is higher, purer, more alive, more subtly, delicately alive, than a sparrow," while man is the most "alive" of all, is he using the word *alive* literally or figuratively? Do you discover much denotative meaning in the word? If you were going to judge which of two men was the more alive in Lawrence's sense, on what would you base your judgment? Would these be valid standards?
5. Comment on the language: is it characterized by general or specific, abstract or concrete, words and phrases? Are there many im-

- ages? Do they appeal strongly to the senses? Do they serve a purpose or are they merely decorative?
6. Is Lawrence's criticism of modern man strengthened or weakened by his addressing him as "You idiot! You cheap-jack idiot!"?
  7. To what extent are you aware of rhythm in the more important passages of the essay? When you are aware of it, is the effect of the rhythm appropriate to the purpose of the essay? Cite examples to support your statements.
  8. Comment on Lawrence's use of the short paragraph.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

(P. 335)

1. Irony of statement has been defined (page 603) as that in which the intended meaning is different from, and frequently contrary to, the apparent meaning. This essay is widely regarded as the most powerful and devastating series of ironical statements in the language. At what point did you first realize that the statements were ironical? Did this point occur before or after the point at which you first understood the nature of the "modest proposal"? What details first suggested that the writing was ironical? Do you think that this essay is an unusually powerful example of irony? Is it more powerful than "The Principles of Newspeak"? Why?
2. Since the essay is ironic, then presumably its particular purpose is not to persuade the reader to accept and support the modest proposal for disposing of Irish children. What, then, is the particular purpose? Is it limited to the problem of poverty in Ireland?
3. The general purpose of this essay is the same as that of "Aristocracy": to persuade the reader to accept certain ideas by appealing to his emotions. To achieve this purpose, both essays try to shock the reader. In "Aristocracy," many vivid images and other powerfully connotative words and phrases, short sentences and paragraphs, emphatic rhythmical patterns, repetition, and even rather violent name-calling are employed. In general, what means are

- employed in this essay? Are they more or less effective than those employed in "Aristocracy"? Explain your answer.
4. Where is the main "point" of the essay most definitely stated? Is the statement direct or indirect? Is this order of ideas in the essay an effective one? Would some other order, such as stating the main "point" in the first paragraph, be more effective? Explain your answer in terms of the purpose and tone of the essay.
  5. Does the essay employ many images? Are the images appropriate to the purpose? Are they vivid? Cite specific examples in support of your answers.
  6. What is the apparent attitude of the narrator toward ladies, "fine gentlemen," "gentlemen of fortune," those who attend lord mayors' feasts and similar public occasions, and Englishmen in general? What is the real attitude expressed by the essay? Upon what details do you base your answer?
  7. The narrator's nature as revealed unconsciously in his plan for Ireland is obviously different from his nature as he likes to picture it to himself. Find several phrases which exhibit the narrator's nature as he likes to see it; find several others which exhibit the same deficiencies in his nature as the plan does. In what way does this double quality in the narrator sharpen the satire? In what way does it make the essay a more profound comment on the nature of man?
  8. What is the effect of referring to "a child just dropped from its dam," "about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders," "twenty thousand [children] . . . reserved for breed," and "the fore or hind quarter [of a child]"?

DAVY CROCKETT IN LOVE

(p. 387)

1. Crockett obviously was not a highly literate man nor a trained artist. Yet many critics and readers regard his writing as real, if minor, art. Do you agree with this opinion?
2. Does this essay offer any insights into the nature of pioneer life

not offered by the essays of Turner and Mumford? If you think it does, do any of them result from greater complexity and concreteness? Explain your answer in terms of specific details and their relations with each other within the essay.

3. What virtues praised by Turner in his essay and what faults deplored by Mumford in his essay does Crockett's account of pioneer life reveal? Does Crockett agree in any way with the views of either of the other two writers?
4. Would Mark Twain, who so disapproved of Cooper as a writer on the pioneer, approve of Crockett? On what do you base your answer?
5. Granted that it is the obvious one for an autobiography, what effect does the point of view have upon the essay?
6. Writing is considered to be sentimental when it expresses emotions which seem too intense for the occasion. Often such writing tries to evoke an uncritical, stock response by means of insufficiently motivated (and sometimes irrelevant) references to the hearth and homestead, mother love, cooing babies, innocent maidens (especially those in distress), strong, silent men, and so forth. No subject is more likely to lead to sentimental writing than young love, the subject of this essay. Some of the passages in the essay deal with just those aspects (unrequited passion, loneliness, betrayal of the lover) most abused by the sentimentalists. Do you find these passages sentimental? Do they seem to be sincere? Does their sincerity—or lack of it—have anything to do with whether or not they are sentimental? Explain your answer in terms of specific details and their effects.
7. What kind of man and social milieu are suggested by the following?  
 "I concluded I couldn't do any longer without a wife; and so I cut out to hunt me one."  
 "I thought this was glorification enough without spectacles."  
 "I was determined to stand up to my rack, fodder or no fodder."
8. Lively narratives appeal to the senses. Note some of the ways in which an appeal to the senses has been made in this essay and comment on their effectiveness.

TROOPER SILAS TOMKYN COMBERBACKE  
(p. 400)

1. In the short space of his life covered by this essay, Coleridge managed to do more foolish things than Dr. Arnold did in a lifetime. Like "Dr. Arnold," this essay is intended to amuse us, in part, by presenting the oddities of its subject, and it lists the foolish actions of Coleridge with apparent relish. Does it, like "Dr. Arnold," ridicule its subject? Does it encourage us to reject Coleridge or to accept him on his own terms? What attitude toward Coleridge does it express? What does the final sentence reveal about this attitude?
2. Comment upon the order of ideas in the essay and its relation to the purpose. Is it effective?
3. In the main, is character explicitly or implicitly expressed? Explain your answer.
4. The irony and exaggeration in the essay create certain distortions in the picture of Coleridge. In view of the particular purpose, ideas, and tone of the essay, do these distortions seem unfair and misleading, or do they seem to be meaningful and revealing of the real character of Coleridge?
5. Out of the many pieces Coleridge wrote during this period, Forster selects for mention a "Latin declamation on Posthumous Fame" and the poem "To a Young Ass." Why are these particularly appropriate?
6. Between the opening and the revelation of Coleridge's identity, Forster mixes points of view and levels of usage. What is the nature of these inconsistencies? Is there any apparent reason for them? Is it enough to justify them?
7. Choose some person whom you know well and list his predominating characteristics. Then for each of these characteristics, cite one or two representative details or illustrative actions which would be likely to make a vivid impression on the reader, would

help to express a definite attitude toward your subject, and would suggest other details and actions which you have not mentioned.

8. Read the account of Coleridge in *The Dictionary of National Biography* and compare the facts given there about young Coleridge and the facts presented by the essay. On the basis of this comparison and your experience in answering the seventh question, comment on the effectiveness and value of this essay.

LANDFALL

(p. 418)

1. Like Parkman, Morison obviously adds something to the facts recorded about his subject. What is the effect of his additions? Do they seriously interfere with the literal facts? Do they illuminate and intensify the meanings of these facts? Are they justified by the purpose?
2. What is the effect of Morison's inserting his own experience as a sailor? Is this apparent disruption of the narrative sufficiently motivated?
3. Determine the level of usage in the essay. What is the effect of such expressions as "The vessels were tearing along at 9 knots" and "One guesses that Rodrigo was fed up with false alarms"? Are such expressions appropriate to the subject and purpose? Can you justify the use of Spanish terms?
4. What is the function in the essay of Martín Alonso's consultation with Cristóbal Garcia in the paragraph on page 419 beginning "Anyone who has come onto land under sail at night . . .?"
5. What is the effect of the dialogue?
6. Why does the narrative shift to the present tense in the third paragraph? Does this apparent inconsistency threaten or strengthen the unity of the essay?
7. Does this essay have the concreteness, vividness, aesthetic interest, and richness of meaning that we expect of literary works? Explain



and defend your answer by referring to specific details in the essay.

8. The story of Columbus's discovery of America has been told many times. What has this account added to your conception of the story?

#### THE DEATH OF STONEWALL JACKSON

(p. 424)

1. In handling such a huge topic as a battle, Tate has been obliged to use only a few of the countless details available to him. Do the ones he has chosen successfully represent the nature and significance of the whole body of details? Has Tate avoided the abstractness which so often characterizes the accounts of battles between large armies? If so, how?
2. Good descriptions and narrations appeal to the senses. Note some of the ways in which such an appeal is made in this essay and comment on their effectiveness.
3. Only once in the essay is Jackson's character directly described or evaluated. How well do you know Jackson when you have finished the essay? How much does the final sentence tell you about him? Explain how you came to know what you do about Jackson and criticize Tate's method of presenting him.
4. When Tate quotes the taunts which the marching enlisted men flung at the mounted officers (page 425), the language of the essay plunges to the level of vulgar usage. Immediately afterward, in the description of General Hooker at Chancellorsville, it rises to a high, formal level, and the words chosen are slightly artificial and rhetorical. In what way are the two levels appropriate to the material and to the general purpose of the essay? What is the effect of the sudden and marked contrast between them?
5. Find several phrases throughout the essay that help to give it a conversational tone and explain what it is about them that has this effect. Is this tone appropriate to the purpose of the essay? Explain your answer.

6. Tate has carried his economy of treatment into the smaller scenes. When he was placed in the ambulance, Jackson asked the doctor in charge if the ambulance could be stopped so that Colonel Crutchfield might be helped. Tate writes, "The ambulance bumped and jolted on." What is the effect of this sentence? On what does the effect depend? Should Tate have given the doctor's reply?
7. Pick out the images and other strongly connotative words and phrases in the paragraph on page 428 beginning "The murmuring roar of the battle east of the Furnace had died away." Are their effects consistent? Are they appropriate to the purpose of the essay? Do they show tension and integration? Explain your answer by reference to specific details.
8. Comment upon Tate's use of sentence and paragraph length and patterns of prose rhythm, particularly in the description of the battle and the account of Jackson's last hours.

DE SOTO AND THE NEW WORLD

(p. 439)

1. The purpose of this essay has two aspects, one literary, the other historical. Ignoring for the moment the literary aspect, what do you think is the intention of the historical aspect? Is it simply to provide us with most of the known facts about De Soto's explorations, or is there some other, less obvious intention for which the narrative of facts provides the framework and material?
2. Who is "She"? Do "her" comments serve only a literary function, or do they help in the realization of the historical part of the general purpose? (This is really a way of asking whether or not this essay is unified and compact—whether or not it has a design. If it is unified and compact—if it *does* have a design, then it can be both literature and history. Otherwise, it cannot be literature, for "her" comments, however "literary," will not be functional but only ornamental appendages; and it can only be poor history, for its historical facts and explanations will be obscured by the meaningless interruptions. It may be helpful in answering this question

to compare the essay with the article on De Soto in *The Dictionary of American Biography*.)

3. What is the point of view in the passages narrating the facts? What is the level of usage? Is it suited to the point of view? What is the tone? Is it appropriate?
4. What is the level of usage of the passages devoted to "her" comments? What is the tone? How does it compare with the tone of the narrative passages? Is there any significance in the difference? Does the difference generate tension in the essay? If so, how?
5. Is the language characterized by general or specific, abstract or concrete, words and phrases? Cite specific instances in support of your answer.
6. What are the connotations of the place names in the narrative passages? Do they and the images of the landscape and the Indians in any way suggest "her" and link the narrative with the comment?
7. Comment upon the effects of the rhythm in the passage beginning on page 442 with "*She*— It is I, in my son, Tuscaloosa. . . ." Are they appropriate to the apparent purpose of "her" comments? Do you find any other notable examples of prose rhythm in the essay? If so, where? What is their effect?
8. What is the effect of the final paragraph upon the major ideas and tone of the essay as a whole? What specific effect does it have upon your estimate of the importance of De Soto's career?

#### A RAID IN THE DESERT

(p. 463)

1. Compare this essay with "Guy Fawkes," which also describes the preparations for blowing up an "enemy." List the more important differences that you note and account for them in terms of the difference of purpose.
2. What interpretations and evaluations of human experience are suggested by the treatment of this isolated episode in the first

World War? By what standards does Lawrence seem to be judging the episode and life in general? Do they seem to you to be valid standards?

3. Since Lawrence at no point interrupts his narrative to meditate or comment, how are his interpretations and evaluations communicated to us?
4. Even though they are all more or less concerned with a single problem (the blowing up of the train), the events of this narrative—the storm, the discovery by the Turks, the “picnic,” the destruction of the rails, the capture of the machine-gunners—are only loosely connected. In what ways, then, has Lawrence obtained the unity and design of a literary essay?
5. How is the enemy characterized? What attitude toward the enemy is expressed in the essay? By what means is it expressed?
6. To what extent is the character of the narrator an important part of the subject? What is his apparent attitude toward the experiences he describes? How is his attitude revealed?
7. Find several instances of the use of understatement and describe their effect upon the tone of the essay.
8. Of the storm and its aftermath, Lawrence writes, “. . . the sun disappeared, blotted out by thick rags of yellow air. . . . The brown wall of cloud from the hills was now very near, rushing changelessly upon us with a loud grinding sound. . . . When we got back my hands and feet were too broken to serve me longer, and I lay down and shivered for an hour or so. . . . Our teeth chattered, and we trembled and hissed involuntarily, while our hands drew in like claws.” Compare his description with the following: “The sun disappeared behind clouds of yellow dust. The dust-laden wind from the hills moved swiftly toward us with a great roar. When we got back I could not use my hands and feet because they were so bruised, and I lay down and shivered for an hour or so. Our teeth chattered and we trembled and breathed erratically, while the muscles of our hands stiffened with cold.” Which version is the more concrete? The more complex? The more vivid? The more expressive? In each instance, explain your answer in terms of specific details of language.

A VISIT TO GRANDPA'S  
(p. 473)

1. Two ways of life are pitted against each other in the little village: the way of the tailor and barber and the way of the grandfather. The first way is symbolized by the barber's colored stick, the second by a fancy waistcoat and invisible horses. How much is the boy aware of the differences between the two ways? Does his awareness change in the course of the essay? Which way does the essay seem to favor?
2. Is the villagers' pursuit of the grandfather presented as comic, pathetic, absurd, cruel, stupid, farcical, or tragic? Does it have any symbolic significance? Should any importance be attached to the fact that the boy is with the villagers at the end?
3. In Lawrence's "A Raid in the Desert" comparatively few images were used, and those that appeared suggested a bright, bare world indifferent to man but here and there touched momentarily with beauty and abundance. They also suggested some of the standards, based on his experiences in this world, whereby Lawrence judged life. This essay, on the other hand, is remarkable for the large number of its images. Is there enough consistency among them to suggest a particular kind of world? If so, what is this world like? Do the images suggest the standards whereby Thomas judges it?
4. What is the effect of presenting the narrative from the boy's point of view? In answering the question you might select an experience you underwent as a child and consider the differences in the selection and arrangement of details resulting from treating it from the position of (a) yourself as a child, (b) yourself at your present age, (c) a middle-aged friend of the family, (d) a child specialist, (e) your mother, and so forth.
5. Thomas could have recalled other details from his visit to his grandfather's home. Supposedly he used those that appear because they fitted into the design of the essay. Why do you think he

- used the details of the wood full of pigeons (page 475) and the parson's ducks (page 476)? Do these details merely provide information about the setting, or do they serve some other purpose?
6. Describe the methods used to characterize the grandfather. Are they effective? Are they consistent with the purpose and point of view?
  7. How do you explain the fact that the grandfather drives the pony as if it were a bison and then remarks, "You're a weak little pony, Jim, to pull big men like us"?
  8. In the introduction to the third section, mention was made of the tension in the meeting with the poacher. What other instances of tension do you find in the essay? Do you think there is enough tension, integration, appropriateness, and consistency to warrant calling this a literary essay? Justify your answer by reference to specific details and their effects.

SUNSHINE CHARLEY

(p. 492)

1. In a few sentences define the purpose of the essay as precisely as you can.
2. To what extent does the essay support the central ideas in Hook's "The Hero in Democracy" and the criticism of America in Parkes's "America's Responsibilities"?
3. Divide the essay into its main sections and state the topic and purpose of each section. Describe the order of the topics and comment upon its effectiveness in terms of interest, clarity, and unity.
4. What is the anecdote at the beginning of the essay supposed to illustrate? What is the significance of the allusion to Louis the Fourteenth's grammar? Is the allusion appropriate? What is the symbolic significance of the incident in which Bruce Barton, the son of a minister and the author of a life of Christ, is shown the world from the Bankers' Club and "prostrates" himself before Mitchell? To what is implicit allusion made?

5. Is Wilson's use of details of physical appearance, particularly of stature and facial structure and expression, to suggest mental and moral qualities effective? Is it justified? On what grounds?
6. In this essay the focus of interest is upon Mitchell more as a type than as an individual. Which do you think is the more difficult: the description of an individual or the description of a type? How would the difference affect the choice of images, the illustrative anecdotes, and the point of view?
7. Choose some person whom you know well and whom you consider to be a good representative of a type. Consider how you would describe that person as a representative of the type. What details would you include? What details would you omit? Explain your answers.
8. To what extent does this essay have the concreteness, complexity, aesthetic interest, and richness of meaning that we expect of literary works? Explain and defend your answer.

## L O N D O N

(p. 499)

1. State the main idea of this essay in a single sentence. In what part of the essay is this idea most explicitly put? Comment on the effectiveness of this order.
2. Do you observe any important omissions in this representation of a great city during fifty of the most dramatic years of its life? If so, does the apparent purpose justify them? Do they affect your estimate of the worth of the essay?
3. Are the author's judgments of the various plans for rebuilding London the only ones that could be made from the facts he presents? How does he try to persuade us to accept his? Is he successful?
4. Define the level of usage. What is its effect upon the tone of the essay? Cite some specific examples and discuss their functions in the essay.

5. From what he reveals of himself, what kind of a man do you suppose the narrator to be? Is his personality an important element in the essay? Why? What would be the effect of presenting the ideas of this essay in a completely impersonal way?
6. Like the portrait painter and the biographer, who must select and arrange a few details which will suggest the whole of their subject, the author of this essay has been compelled to limit himself to representative aspects of London which suggest not only its appearance but also its ways of life during five periods. He has made extensive use of images of light, shadow, and colors associated with brightness and gloom. How do these images suggest (a) the delightful London of the author's boyhood? (b) the dullness of London in the thirties? (c) the insect life under a remote universe in the early years of the last war? (d) the triumphant spirit of the spring of 1943? (e) the resurrection of the city? (f) the unique beauty of London, which survives all changes and ought to be emphasized in the rebuilding of the city?
7. Does the anecdote at the conclusion have a "point"? If so, is it an appropriate one on which to end? What of the other illustrations in the essay: do they serve a specific purpose, or are they simply ornamental? Do any of them seem unusually ingenious and effective? If so, which ones?
8. To what extent does this essay have the concreteness, complexity, aesthetic interest, and richness of meaning that we expect of literary works? Explain and defend your meaning.

WALDEN (1939)

(p. 517)

1. In addition to describing Walden Pond today, this essay interprets and evaluates many aspects of contemporary life. Upon what conceptions of good and evil and of man's proper aspirations and way of life are the interpretations and evaluations based? Are these conceptions shared by the majority of Americans? Do they seem to you to be sensible and worthy of serious consideration? Explain your answer.



2. In his book, *Walden* (1854), Thoreau wrote: "To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. . . . I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach. . . . For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God. . . ." Having thus faced the essential facts, he concluded that ". . . we live meanly, like ants. . . . Our life is frittered away by detail. . . . The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and needless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it is in a rigid economy, a stern and more Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain."

To what extent do the criticisms of American life today expressed in this essay agree with the views expressed by Thoreau? Are there any aspects of the contemporary scene which are approved by this essay but which, in so far as you can judge from the passage just quoted, would be disapproved by Thoreau?

3. The essay makes frequent allusion to the appearance of Walden Pond as it was described in Thoreau's book. Is the purpose simply one of supplying factual information about the many curious differences between the earlier and present appearances, or is more involved? Explain your answer by reference to one or two of the allusions and their apparent function.
4. What is the tone of the essay? What are the most important means of expressing it? Is it appropriate to the subject and the purpose? Explain your answer.
5. Comment on the function of the narrator. What is his apparent character? How is it revealed?

6. In the paragraph on page 522 beginning, "Leaving the highway I turned off into the woods toward the pond . . .," the narrator describes his first view of the pond in a series of images. Are the images vivid? Are they strongly connotative? Do they seem well chosen? What is their overall effect? How much of it depends upon the use of contrast?
7. In his description of Walden Breezes, White writes, "On the porch was a distorting mirror, to give the traveler a comical image of himself, who had miraculously learned to gaze in an ordinary glass without smiling." What is the meaning of this sentence? Is the effect of "miraculously" bitter, humorous, sympathetic, or something else?
8. "A People on Wheels" presented many of the aspects of American life treated in this essay, interpreting and evaluating them by some of the same standards. Yet, despite the fact that it had much in common with this essay, it was placed in the second section rather than in the third section with the literary essays. What qualities, not found in "A People on Wheels," does this essay have which justify placing it among the literary essays? Explain your answer in terms of specific details and their effects.

S A V T A T

(p. 525)

1. What is the real purpose of this essay? When you have finished reading it, do you know very much about the physical appearance of Savtat? Is the amount of your knowledge important? Explain your answer.
2. What conceptions about older, less sophisticated societies implied in "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn" are stated or implied in "Savtat"?
3. What assumption, implicit throughout the essay, lies behind the statement, "Yet to die, and to know a meaning in death, is a better destiny than to be saved from dying"?

4. What do Pan and Cadmus symbolize? Why does his invention of letters make Cadmus the archenemy of Pan? What is meant by the statement that Cadmus "Made mankind eat of the tree of knowledge; he made joy and sorrow dangerous because he furnished the means of commemorating them, that is to say of analyzing them, of being appalled by them?"
5. Explain, as nearly as you can in a few words, the meaning of the anecdote of St. Hilarion and the dragon. Has the meaning been stated explicitly or implicitly? Is it relevant only to the immediate context, or has it some universal significance? Why does the essay state that the story was "perfectly true" and "cannot be doubted"? In what sense, if any, is this correct?
6. Divide the essay into its main sections and state the topic and particular purpose of each. By what means are the sections held together? How well is the essay integrated?
7. Find at least six metaphors and comment upon their vividness, appropriateness, and originality.
8. Choose some place which you know well and with whose local history you are familiar. Prepare a short list of representative physical details and anecdotes which you would use in writing a description of it no longer than this essay. Then make another list of the problems confronting the writer of such descriptions. Using your lists and what you have learned in preparing them, comment on the effectiveness and literary merit of this essay.

## OF STUDIES

(p. 532)

1. What is the purpose of this essay? Does it include attempting to sway the reader by an appeal to his emotions? If you think it does, how is the appeal made?
2. How adequate is the conception of the mind presented here? Are there any attributes of the mind, not considered here, which you believe are relevant to the subject and purpose? Are the assump-

- tions about the effects of the various studies cited valid? Explain your answer.
3. Great emphasis is placed upon the *use* of studies and upon the view that "To spend too much time in studies is sloth." What about the scholars who spend as much time as they can in research and other forms of study and who are not interested in "using" the results of their work in the conduct of public life: are they wrong to spend their lives thus? Or does Bacon take too narrow a view of studies? What standards of value are implied in his view?
  4. The tone of this essay is formal and grave—a tone appropriate to profound remarks. Is the essay profound? Explain your answer.
  5. Is the language of the essay general or specific, abstract or concrete? Comment on its effectiveness in view of the purpose.
  6. Comment on several instances of the use of parallel structure and their rhythmical effects. Are there any indications that in some sentences the details have been arranged more for the sake of the parallelism than for the sake of the meaning—that precision of statement may have been sacrificed to obtain grace and balance?
  7. Study the sentence "They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience." What does it mean? Do you agree with it? Is the simile effective? Does it make the sentence concrete and specific?
  8. Bacon writes, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few are to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly." Since an explanation of the metaphors is provided, are the metaphors necessary? Are they effective? What would be lost if they were omitted?

ON THE FEELING OF IMMORTALITY  
IN YOUTH

(p. 534)

1. What is the principal idea of this essay? At what point in the essay is it most explicitly stated? Does this order of the ideas seem effective? Explain your answer.
2. The essay criticizes man in general for his self-love and for the extravagance of his desires and presumptions. Do any of the other essays which you have read seem to express this self-love and extravagance? If so, can a defense be made for them? On what grounds? Do any of the other essays seem to agree with this criticism of man? If so, on what details is the agreement based?
3. In the long first paragraph, the essay attempts to describe the feelings of immortality in youth. By what means are these feelings suggested? Are these means effective? If so, why? If not, why not? Insofar as you can judge, is Hazlitt's conception of these feelings accurate? Explain your answer.
4. The tone of this essay is not constant but moves among several attitudes. What are these attitudes? Are the shifts from one to another sudden or gradual? Are the different attitudes appropriate to main ideas of the essay and to its overall purpose? Justify your answer in terms of specific attitudes and ideas.
5. What point of view is employed in the essay? What effects does it have upon the expression of the ideas and the tone? Is it appropriate to the purpose? Why?
6. Comment on the usage level and the degree of concreteness of the language and their relation to the tone and purpose of the essay.
7. Find six metaphors and comment on (a) their vividness, (b) their connotations, (c) their function in the immediate context, (d) their effectiveness, and (e) their appropriateness to the purpose and tone of the essay.
8. In the first sentence of the third paragraph ("To see the golden sun. . .") a great many different details have been brought to-

gether. By what means are they united? Are these means sufficient to keep the sentence from falling apart? What is the function of the details? Why are so many required? Where is the "point" of the sentence presented? Is this an effective arrangement of the sentence elements? Why?

ON THE PLEASURES OF NO LONGER  
BEING VERY YOUNG  
(p- 542)

1. What is the tone of this essay? To what extent is the tone an expression of the interpretation and evaluation of the general subject? How important is the tone to the meaning of the essay as a whole?
2. Study the role of the narrator. What is his apparent character? How is it suggested? Of what importance is it in the essay? Does he impress you as a clear-sighted observer and critic of life? Why?
3. Comment on the use of paradox in the essay. Are the paradoxes always real ones? How seriously do you think we are supposed to take them? On what do you base your answer?
4. What is the effect of the occasional exaggerations upon the tone of the essay? Do they make it more or less convincing? Explain your answers.
5. Comment on the use of contrast in the second paragraph. Are the statements by which the old and young are exemplified valid? Are the contrasts real or artificial? Explain your answer.
6. What is the point of the reference to the Oldest Inhabitant and the Village Orator? Why are these terms treated as proper names? What are their connotations and those of the "village church" and the "factory for chemicals"? How are they used in the context?
7. Plan an essay on the advantages of being young. Try to draw as many of your points from the examples and details of this essay as you can, but simply reverse their effect. How many of the paradoxes of the essay can you turn against its argument in favor of "no longer being very young"? How many of the ideas can be

reworked for different interpretations of life? After making your plans, what do you think of the value of this essay?

8. Do you find the essay amusing? Why?

THE CORRUPTION OF COMFORT

(p. 547)

1. The criticism of contemporary life which Van Doren makes has been made many times before. (It is stated directly or implied in several of the essays in this volume, notably "The Principles of Newspeak," "A People on Wheels," "America's Responsibilities," "Aristocracy," "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn," "Sunshine Charley," and "London.") Some critics have used statistics to convince the reader; some have used logic; some have used devices of emphasis or have tried to shock and anger him. What methods does Van Doren use? Do you find them successful? How does their success compare with that of the methods used in "Aristocracy"?
2. The ideas of this essay are very broad and could be discussed in ways that would make them seem remote from our experience and of little immediate consequence. How does the essay give them concreteness and immediacy?
3. Where is the main point of the essay most explicitly stated? Comment on the effectiveness of this order in organizing the particular ideas of this essay. What other orders are possible? Does any one of them seem better suited to the purpose of the essay? Explain your answer.
4. What is the level of usage in the essay? What effect does it have upon the tone? Is it appropriate to the ideas expressed? Why?
5. What is the narrator like? On what do you base your answer? How much are you aware of him? How does your awareness affect your response?
6. If the images for the age before the First World War are unsatisfactory, what is the use of mentioning them? Does their inclusion spoil the compactness and unity of the essay? Explain your answer.

7. What, in their contexts, are the rhythmical effects of the following sentences? "Nerves in the loud din of the new age learned new agonies." (Page 549) "Things are." (Page 549)
8. What is the meaning of the conclusion of the second paragraph: ". long homebound, they ran wild till they were lost"? How does this meaning depend upon the interaction of the concluding words with all the details and devices in the rest of the paragraph? What does this interaction reveal about the literary skill that went into the writing of this essay?

#### THE VICAR OF LYNCH

(p. 551)

1. Does the essay have any purpose beyond that of amusing us? Does the anecdote have any "point"? If so, what do you think it is? Do you think it is significant or trivial? (The essay is reprinted from a book entitled *Trivia*. On the basis of this one piece, would you say that the title is ironic or not?)
2. The narrator is unusually prominent in this essay. What is he like? From what do you infer the nature of his character? What is his function in the essay? What would be the effect of presenting the affair of the vicar directly without any awareness of a narrator on the reader's part?
3. What is the narrator's attitude toward the vicar? What is his attitude toward the harvest festival? (It is interesting in this connection to compare this attitude with that expressed in "The Dance of the Sprouting Corn" toward a very similar pagan ritual.)
4. To what extent do differences between the time and place of yourself and those of the narrator affect your response to the essay? Are there any hints in the essay that the author might be exaggerating these differences and exploiting them for special effects?
5. Comment on the order of the main ideas in the essay and its effect.



6. Is the mention at the end of consultation with an Oxford scholar an appended afterthought or an integral part of the essay? Explain your answer in terms of its appropriateness and consistency with the purpose and tone of the essay.
7. Smith writes, "It is much to be regretted that I could not recover full and more exact details of the celebration in which this great scholar had probably embodied his mature knowledge concerning a subject which has puzzled generations of students. But what powers of careful observation could one expect from a group of labourers and small farmers?" Compare his words with the following: "I am sorry that I could not get more adequate details of the ceremony in which this wise old man had probably put all he knew about a subject which has puzzled students for a long time. But you cannot expect powers of careful observation from a group of workmen and bumpkins." What differences do you observe between the details and effects of these two passages? Is the first one noticeably more suitable to the essay? Explain your answer.
8. Why are we told that the narrator was out bicycling over the hills and had ridden down a valley of cornfields, along an unfenced road, and through several gates, which he had to open, before he came to the vicar's church? Is the purpose simply one of giving factual information, or is it more involved?

#### THE NIGHT THE BED FELL

(p. 556)

1. "Brevity," we have been told, "is the soul of wit." Nothing spoils a joke or a funny anecdote more than the use of too many words or details. James Thurber is one of the most successful of humorists and an expert writer who carefully revises his work, considering as he does the effect of even the smallest elements. How is it possible to justify the long aside on his remarkable relatives? What is the effect of the aside in the essay. Does it disrupt the unity of the essay and make integration impossible?

2. James Thurber has often been called a serious critic of life. Are any interpretations and evaluations of human experience stated or implied in this essay? If so, do any of them seem serious and important? Why?
3. What evidence, if any, is there in the essay that Thurber can write compact, economical prose? Does the evidence suggest that where the writing seems loose and rambling it is actually not and that its appearance is a contrived effect? If this is the case, is the effect appropriate?
4. What is the function of the narrator? What is gained by presenting the facts from his point of view? Explain your answer.
5. In general, the tone of the essay is one of easy, informal conversation, and the level of usage is appropriate to it. What, therefore, are the apparent purposes and effects, in this context, of words and phrases such as "verisimilitude," "this seemed to allay his fears a little," "suffered under the premonition," "the disposition of their occupants," "at this juncture," and "frantic endeavor to extricate me"?
6. What is the effect of mentioning that the father wanted to sleep in the attic "to be away where he could think"? Is this detail well chosen and placed? Explain your answer.
7. Considered by itself, the little note written by Aunt Sarah Shoaf is pathetic. Why is it not simply pathetic in the essay? Is all its pathos lost?
8. Since, in the events that follow on this remarkable night, Herman does *not* sing in his sleep, what purpose is served by mentioning that sometimes he did and by naming his favorite songs?

IS THERE AN OSTEOSYNCHRONDROITRICIAN  
IN THE HOUSE?

(p. 561)

1. The type of humor represented by this essay has been called a fantasy of total revolt against the machine age. Do you agree with

this description of it? If you do, do you think that such humor can make a serious criticism of society? How?

2. What is the character of the narrator? How much of the interest in the essay is focused upon it? In what ways is it a source of humor? How close do you feel to the narrator? Is this essay, with its extreme informality and "intimacy" of detail, as familiar as, for example, "The Vicar of Lynch" or "On the Pleasures of No Longer Being Very Young"? Explain your answer.
3. Can you find an over-all organization behind the seeming chaos of the details and devices? If so, in what elements of the essay do you find it? Does it give unity to the essay as a whole?
4. Find several instances in which the order of ideas is apparently based upon association. Are you able to follow the pattern of associations? Explain your answer.
5. Comment on the effect of mixing levels of usage in the essay.
6. Cite some examples of ironic exaggeration and ironic reversals of the expected conclusions of phrases and sentences. How do the ironies affect your attitude toward the narrator? Why?
7. One of Perelman's favorite tricks is using figures of speech which have become clichés and pretending to take them literally (as in the reference to burying his head in the paper) or mixing them together in ways that result in a seemingly complete inconsistency. Find at least five examples of clichés used thus for humorous effects.
8. Another trick is his rapid allusion to some stereotyped character or situation made all too familiar by inferior literature. Find some of these allusions, identify their sources, and explain how they create humor in the essay.

#### RING OUT, WILD BELLS

(p. 565)

1. Describe the point of view and its function in the essay. What would be the effect of presenting the incident from the position

- of the child who delivered the Gettysburg Address? From the position of Puck's mother? From the position of the director?
2. Compare the tone of this essay with the tone of the essay by Perelman. Do you think that if the tone of the Perelman essay (together with the devices which helped to communicate it) were adapted to this essay the result would be more or less effective than the present result? Why?
  3. Analyze the organization of the essay and comment upon its effectiveness.
  4. How do the brief quotations from his instructions to Puck characterize the director of the play? How does his character add to the humor? How does the essay manage to divert our attention from the director's acute suffering during the disastrous scene so that his desperation is simply funny?
  5. Gibbs has used rather commonplace and even seemingly unimaginative and abstract words to produce an effect of understatement. This is particularly true in the portion of the essay beginning "When my turn came, it was even worse," and in the final paragraph. Does the understatement add to or subtract from the intrinsic humor of the material?
  6. What does the essay gain from the quotations from "A Midsummer-Night's Dream"?
  7. Find at least six figures of speech and comment on their effects and their appropriateness to the purpose and tone of the essay.
  8. What interpretations of life flash out from the midst of all the fun? Are they seemingly accidental, or do they emerge from a consistent and ever-present seriousness behind the gaiety?

GAMESMANSHIP

(p. 570)

1. Satire has been called criticism by laughter. This essay is a good example of such criticism. At what is it directed? Is the essay "Learning to Ski: Straight Running" vulnerable to this satire? Explain your answer.

2. Criticism implies conceptions of what is desirable and undesirable in the aspects of life under consideration. What conceptions are implied in this essay? Do you agree with them? Does your agreement, or lack of it, seriously affect your enjoyment of the essay?
  3. What is parody? To what extent is it used in this essay? What aspects of the rules of sports, of the codes of sportsmanship, and of sports writing are parodied? Give examples.
  4. What is the character of the narrator? From what do you infer it? How important is it in the essay? Explain your answer.
  5. Does the essay show a good understanding of people? If so, how does it show it?
  6. What is the general level of usage? Is it appropriate to the purpose of the essay. In answering this question, cite specific passages and their effects.
  7. Comment on the use of clichés and stereotyped phrases.
  8. The technical devices, tone, and humor of this essay are far removed from those of "Is There an Osteosynchondroitrician in the House?" Which essay do you find more entertaining? Explain your answer.
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## Appendix

CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING

*Robert Herrick*

Get up, get up for shame, the Blooming Morne  
Upon her wings presents the god unshorne.  
See how *Aurora* throwes her faire  
Fresh-quilted colours through the aire:  
Get up, sweet-Slug-a-bed, and see  
The Dew bespangling Herbe and Tree.  
Each Flower has wept, and bow'd toward the East,  
Above an houre since; yet you not drest,  
Nay! not so much as out of bed?  
When all the Birds have Mattens seyde,  
And sung their thankfull Hymnes: 'tis sin,  
Nay, profanation to keep in,  
When as a thousand Virgins on this day,  
Spring, sooner than the Lark, to fetch in May.

Rise; and put on your Foliage, and be seene  
To come forth, like the Spring-time, fresh and greene;  
And sweet as *Flora*. Take no care  
For Jewels for your Gowne, or Haire:  
Feare not; the leaves will strew  
Gemms in abundance upon you:  
Besides, the childhood of the Day has kept,  
Against you come, some *Orient Pearls* unwept:  
Come, and receive them while the light

Hangs on the Dew-locks of the night:  
And *Titan* on the Eastern hill  
Retires himselfe, or else stands still  
Till you come forth. Wash, dresse, be briefe in praying:  
Few beads are best, when once we goe a-Maying.

Come, my *Corinna*, come; and comming, marke  
How each field turns a street; each street a Parke  
Made green, and trimm'd with trees: see how  
Devotion gives each House a Bough,  
Or Branch: Each Porch, each doore, ere this,  
An Arke a Tabernacle is  
Made up of white-thorn neatly enterwove;  
As if here were those cooler shades of love.  
Can such delights be in the street,  
And open fields, and we not see't?  
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey  
The Proclamation made for May:  
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;  
But my *Corinna*, come, let's goe a-Maying.

There's not a budding Boy, or Girle, this day,  
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.  
A deale of Youth, ere this, is come  
Back, and with *White-thorn* laden home,  
Some have dispatcht their Cakes and Creame,  
Before that we have left to dreame:  
And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted Troth,  
And chose their Priest, ere we can cast off sloth:  
Many a green-gown has been given;  
Many a kisse, both odde and even:  
Many a glance too has been sent  
From out the eye, Loves Firmament:  
Many a jest told of the Keyes betraying  
This night, and Locks pickt, yet w'are not a-Maying.

Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime;  
And take the harmlesse follie of the time.  
    We shall grow old apace, and die  
    Before we know our liberty.  
    Our life is short; and our dayes run  
    As fast away as do's the Sunne:  
And as a vapour, or a drop of raine  
Once lost, can ne'er be found againe:  
    So when or you or I are made  
    A fable, song, or fleeting shade;  
    All love, all liking, all delight  
    Lies drown'd with us in endlesse night.  
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying;  
Come, my *Corinna*, come, let's goe a-Maying.

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